

The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review

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AN INVITATION
TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE BROOKLYN
JEWISH CENTER

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A JEWISH STATE IN FACT

THE declaration by the General Council of the World Zionist Organization (printed on page 4) is an epochal document. In legal, as well as practical effect, it is the Declaration of Independence of the new Jewish State. In the sense that it is unilateral in expression it parallels other historic pronouncements of similar kind, notably the American Declaration of Independence. In the fact, however, that it is based upon a prior recognition of the existing rights of the Jewish Commonwealth and, thus, is a bilateral instrument, this declaration is unique in international history. We refer, of course, to the fact—indisputable in the record, although, undoubtedly, it will be sought in many quarters to distort it in interpretation—that the General Council's declaration follows close in point of time upon, and is grounded deeply in point of law in, the Partition Resolution, adopted November 29, 1947, by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The kaleidoscopic succession of international tactics since November 29th unhappily makes necessary a resume of the events following that day. The United Nations, under the sponsorship of the United States, voted by a large majority for the Partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish States. No contemporary student can say of this action that it is a completely just settlement of the Jewish claim to Palestine, and no historian in the future will be able to record it as anything other than a fragmentation of Jewish rights. The Partition Plan is in many respects an inequitable provision for the future of Jewish statehood.

Territorially, it deprives the Jews of seven-eighths of the land guaranteed them by the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate. Militarily, it gives them a frontier which can be defended, if at all, only by supreme effort and at great cost. Governmentally, it imposes on the Jewish State a financial burden for the support of the Arab State which has no warrant in the facts of the situation and which will for years redound only to the benefit of the feudal masters of Arabia. It ignores completely the illegal creation of the Kingdom of Transjordan out of land guaranteed to the Jews. At best, the Partition Proposal was, in theory, a compromise and a settlement forced upon the Jews by the realization that its provisions were the best for which they could hope in a power-ridden international assembly. The Jews accepted partition in good faith. With a realism bred by the centuries-long history of persecution and chicanery forced upon them by stronger powers they stood ready to make the most, for themselves and for the land, of this bad bargain.

It is almost as difficult to recount as it is to explain subsequent developments. The United States suddenly, to the amazement of observers and to the humiliation of its citizens who value the honor of our country, and who hold in high and sacred regard the reputations of its pledge, executed an about-face. This is an act which has had assigned for it no tangible reason, and the motive for which becomes daily more obscure in the murky insinuations of its apologists that it is based upon so-called considerations of national defense.

Whether willingly or not, Senator Austin was compelled to seek justification for this program of betrayal by an interpretation of the statutes and constitution of the United Nations which have emasculated that body's charter and which, if applied to other and subsequent problems arising before the body, will completely frustrate any possibility of the United Nations becoming a vital force in the preservation of international peace. We have said that the reason for the *volte-face* is inexplicable. That is to say, there can be found no justification in law, morals or ethics. Reasons, of course, there are. It is a matter of record that American and British oil companies are the possessors of great interests in Saudi Arabian oil, and that they have powerful connections in the Truman administration. There is not merely an accidental or coincidental relationship between the oil companies financed by Dillon Reed & Co. and the presence in the Truman cabinet of a powerful secretary. It is mortifying to any American citizen to be forced to this conclusion, and yet it is a conclusion in which he is supported by the practically unanimous opinion of responsible commentators, great newspapers, clergymen, senators and men of discernment and freedom and frankness of expression throughout the land. Indeed, these serious charges have not, even by implication, been denied. So secure apparently are the proponents of the oil policy in their strength that they have treated these charges with a silence almost as contemptible as the policy which they have sponsored.

There come times in history when a people is enabled by supreme conviction, great courage and undying devotion to an

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"JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES"

"ביןנו לבין עצמנו"

An Intimate Chat Between Rabbi and Reader

MANY, MANY THANKS

I WANT to utilize this column to express my profound appreciation to everyone in and out of our Brooklyn Jewish Center who helped to make the occasion of my sixtieth birthday the memorable event that it was for me.

It is a pity that words are often inadequate to truly express the feelings of one's heart. No words that my hand could pen could begin to tell how grateful I am for the affection and the esteem which have been shown to me. One heart does feel another. I felt your love, and I knew that your hearts felt the affection and the gratitude which flowed from my heart toward you.

I think that this mutual feeling, which has existed between us throughout all the years, from the very inception of my rabbinate in your midst, is part of the secret of the success which the Brooklyn Jewish Center has achieved.

Though I personally was the recipient and the beneficiary of your affection, I know that I was but a symbol in your mind of the Rabbinate, the spiritual leadership of our people, an institution which you cherish and revere because you recognize the indispensable function which

it holds in the life of Israel. Nay, more, it was a living proof of the reverence which you have for *Torah*, and for all those who endeavor to make our spiritual and cultural treasures the heritage of our people.

In my remarks at the reception, I mentioned those to whom I owe a special debt of thanks. To all of them, from office worker to the distinguished personalities who honored me with their addresses and their greetings, from the rank and file of our membership and worshippers to the officers and the committee, who did so much to make my birthday party so successful—to all, once again, I give my heartfelt thanks.

I pray that I may be privileged to reciprocate in some measure and to return to each of you my felicitations and good wishes for many joyous occasions in your lives.

Israel H. Lewittes

ideal to lift itself by its own boot-straps. This the Jews are now doing in Palestine. They are tired of the obfuscations of international politics. They have determined, in the words of our Bible, no longer to put their trust in princes. They see themselves as the guardians of Jewish destiny for all time to come. They stand four-square upon the rights granted them in the partition resolution and they challenge the world to deprive them of those rights. Theirs is the strength, not only of morals, but of law. The declaration of November 29th by the United Nations is a charter which once given cannot be taken away. It creates as of May 16th (the British Mandate terminating on May 15th) a *de jure* government which, even at this moment, is a *de facto* government. It is useless and silly to talk of preventing partition from taking place

because partition is already an accomplished fact. There are intimations that the United States will attempt to force upon an unwilling United Nations a trusteeship plan for all in Palestine which, in essence, is an enlargement of the trusteeship plan for Jerusalem. That plan must fail for a variety of reasons. Thus, even in the case of Jerusalem, the United Nations has not protected the Holy City from Arab attack. Again trusteeship implies responsibility, the one thing no one in the United Nations appears to be ready to assume with respect to any part of Palestine. Lastly, trusteeship must fail because it represents an inequitable and illegal attempt to rescind a legal action already accepted in the strong forum of public opinion.

—WM. J. SIEGEL.

SLAVES NO MORE!

AN INTERESTING Seder custom prevails among Oriental Jews. At the beginning of the Seder a knock is heard on the door, and the younger members of the family appear in the guise of the wandering Israelites of old.

"Mi atem (Who are you?)" asks the head of the family.

"Israelites—from Egypt," is the reply.

"L'an (Whither)?"

"L'Eretz Yisrael."

Jews who have been uprooted from their homes by the Nazi scourge and the devastation of the last war again ask, "Whither?" And again there is but one reply, "To Eretz Yisrael."

Passover, which commemorates the birth of a nation, must inspire us today to strive for the rebirth of our nation. The Jews have been soldiers of liberty for 4,000 years—and again we strive to achieve that independence for which our chalutzim in Palestine have worked with so much toil and so much self-sacrifice.

Freedom and independence have never been won without a struggle. The Yishuv in Palestine has shown that it is willing to pay the price of liberty. It is not for us, sitting in our comfortable homes here in America, to determine the course of our struggle in Eretz Yisrael. But the Yishuv itself has spoken. The Jews of Palestine have resolved that no sacrifice will deter them from their goal—a free Jewish state in Palestine.

It is for us in America to demonstrate that the Yishuv does not stand alone.

Let not the words of the Haggadah be empty phrases, but rather spurs to action.

"Lo! this is the bread of affliction, which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. . . . This year we celebrate it here, but the next year we hope to celebrate it in the land of Israel. This year we are slaves, but the next year we shall be free men."

—MORDECAI H. LEWITTES.

The text of the Jewish Declaration of Independence is published on page 26.

RECENTLY the "One World Award Committee," composed of outstanding American liberals, decided that the One World Award, established four years ago in memory of Wendell L. Willkie, would go this year to Dr. Albert Einstein. When this selection was publicly announced at a dinner for another Nobel Prize winner and lover of peace, Sir Norman Angell, the chairman explained that the Sage of Princeton had been chosen because of his hatred of militarism, dictatorship and violence, and because he had lent "his unequalled prestige to the causes he identifies with the cause of mankind."

This is not the first time that the great physicist has been honored in this country. Years ago, when New York's Riverside Church was built, the Reverend Dr. Fosdick and his associates decided that part of the edifice's ornamentation should consist of the figures of important men whose work has enriched the world, and in a niche that includes the world's outstanding scientists, the builders placed a sculptured image of Einstein.

Einstein is not only one of the great scientists of this century, but he is one of the very few learned men who step out of the ivory tower of pure science to challenge the foes of humanity whenever they feel that mankind's spiritual values are threatened. He has been called an eminent physicist ever since 1905, when he issued his first statement on the theory of relativity, but his fight against the forces of darkness has not yet been fully recognized or acknowledged.

The old saying that the child is father of the man has been proved to be true in the case of Einstein. Even as a child he heartily disliked militarism. Though born and raised in Bismarck's sabrerattling Germany, he differed from other German youngsters in that they enthusiastically watched the glamorous parades of the German army while he, Albert, used to cry at such sights. While most German children dreamt of marching in those parades as adults, Albert told his parents: "When I grow up, I don't want to be one of those poor people." Without trying to be stuffy, one of his biographers observes: "When the majority saw the rhythm of a happy movement, he (Albert) observed the coercion im-

posed upon the soldiers; he saw the parade as a movement of people compelled to be machines."

Small wonder that an independent individual of this type would loathe the German system of education which permitted the teachers in the elementary schools to act like drill sergeants, while the gymnasium teachers would treat their pupils with the more refined sadism of German lieutenants. It was to be expected that in this period of unmitigated chauvinism the teachers would try their utmost to instill into the minds of the young folks a "Deutschland ueber alles" attitude, yet young Albert remained unaffected by this irrational appeal to certain atavistic instincts in man. However, it would be wrong to assume that it was his Jewishness which caused him to remain immune to Teutonic nationalism; in the first place, Einstein got little formal Jewish education, and he is, despite his pro-Zionist activities, what is generally called an assimilationist; secondly, many German Jews succumbed to the lure of Teutonicism. Take the case of Fritz Haber, the greatest chemist of his time, and Nobel Prize winner. At the beginning of the first World War, when leading German intellectuals prepared a Manifesto culminating in the absurd assertion that German culture and German militarism were identical, Haber was one of the co-signers. Einstein, however, then Professor at the University of Berlin and a member of the Royal Prussian Academy of Science, refused to put his signature under it. Some of his colleagues accused him of being a traitor, of deserting the Reich in a difficult time.

Later, some of these Germans became highly proud of "their" Einstein (who had acquired Swiss citizenship, but actually was a citizen of the world). A year after the armistice, expeditions dispatched by British scientific societies to Brazil and West Africa to make certain astronomic observations, verified Einstein's bold theory that rays of light are bent as they pass in the neighborhood of the sun.

ALBERT EINSTEIN—CITIZEN OF ONE WORLD

By ALFRED WERNER

Einstein then became a German hero to many. More ferocious Germans, however, permitted their anti-Semitism to dismiss Einstein's theories as "Bolshevism in physics," "Jewish physics," and so forth. At the same time British scientists hailed the theory of relativity as "one of the greatest achievements in the history of human thought." However, since the man in the street was bound to loathe everything German, British newspapers decided to sell Einstein to their public as a Swiss, although he was a native of Bavaria. Allergic to any sort of prejudice, whether directed against Jews, Germans, or any other group of people, Einstein, in an article written for the London *Times*, gently chided the editors for their intentional inaccuracy:

"The description of me and my circumstances in the *Times* shows an amusing flare of imagination on the part of the writer. By an application of the theory of relativity to the taste of the reader, today in Germany I am called a German man of science and in England I am represented as a Swiss Jew. If I come to be regarded as a 'bete noire,' the description will be reversed, and I shall become a Swiss Jew for the Germans and a German for the English."

Einstein, who changed his citizenship several times and is now a citizen of the United States, never cared for any kind of aggressive nationalism, nor was he ever a member of a political party. On the other hand, this solitary thinker, who once characterized himself as "a horse for single harness, not cut out for tandem or teamwork," frequently abandoned his profound studies for a while to lend his prestige to the two movements that are close to his heart, namely, Zionism and Pacifism.

While deeply impressed by the ethical values of the Old Testament, Einstein has little, if anything, in common with Jewish orthodoxy. If he felt that Zion-

ism was aggressive or narrow-minded, he would not have sponsored it, as he has been doing for a quarter of a century or longer, and whenever he noticed tendencies and trends in Zionism not to his liking, he would not hesitate to object to them. But why did Einstein, known as a foe of nationalism, espouse Zionism? Because, according to one biographer, he sees in Zionism the only active movement among the Jews capable of arousing in them the sense of dignity; because, according to another biographer, he ardently deplores the injustice on the part of the world at large towards a people that is constantly and unreasonably under attack. In particular, Einstein noticed with deep pain how discrimination against Jews in many Eastern European universities prevented many a gifted youth from embarking upon an academic career. Realizing that a Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the pet idea of Chaim Weizmann, would enable many thwarted Jewish professors and students to develop their abilities as free men, Einstein gladly accepted Weizmann's invitation to tour the United States to help raise funds for the establishment of the University. Together with the great chemist and president of the World Zionist Organization, Einstein addressed mass meetings from coast to coast. "Follow Weizmann, and you will do well!" he admonished American Jewry. In the city of Cleveland, all Jewish businessmen closed their shops to march in a parade that accompanied Einstein from the station to the City Hall.

Einstein visited Palestine in 1923 as a host of Herbert Samuel, the English Jew who served as High Commissioner. Many years later, at the opening of the Palestine Pavilion at the New York World's Fair, Einstein was chosen to deliver the main address, as though he were the official ambassador of Eretz Israel. He has been a member of the Hebrew University's Board of Governors since its establishment, and its Institute of Physics is named after him. In 1933, the aforementioned Fritz Haber wrote to him that he intended to apply for a position at the Hebrew University. "The whole world is topsy-turvy!" Einstein exclaimed in surprise, remembering how the great chemist had repeatedly urged him to

adopt the German nationalistic creed. Dismissed by the Nazis, Haber had fled to Switzerland. But he never went to the Holy Land. In January, 1934, he killed himself in Lucerne.

Einstein was never so alienated from Judaism as was his unhappy friend. In fact, he once even tried to discover the roots of his pacifism in his innate Jewishness.

"Jewry" he told a Jewish meeting in Berlin "has proved that the intellect is the best weapon in history. Oppressed by violence, Jewry has mocked her enemies by rejecting war and at the same time has taught peace. . . . It is the duty of us Jews to put at the disposal of the world our several-thousand-years-old sorrowful experience and, true to the ethical traditions of our forefathers, become soldiers in the fight for peace, united with the noblest elements in all cultural and religious circles."

As far as Einstein is concerned, he did, indeed, "put at the disposal of the world" his prestige in behalf of the preservation of peace. His pacifism, based on his "deepest antipathy to every kind of cruelty and hatred," was stronger than his desire to be left alone, so he accepted an appointment to the *Commission pour la Coopération Intellectuelle* of the League of Nations. Only upon noticing that the League did not function satisfactorily and that, instead of preventing the use of force altogether, it urged the weak nations to submit to the demands of the big powers, did he resign: "I withdraw because the League of Nations, as it functions at present, not only does not embody the ideal of an international organization, but actually discredits such an ideal."

How fervently Einstein loathes all military institutions can be learned from an appeal he issued in 1931, placing his reputation at the disposal of the War Resisters International:

"I appeal to all men and women, whether they be eminent or humble, to declare that they will refuse to give any further assistance to war or to the preparation of war. I ask them to tell their governments this in writing and to register this decision by informing me that they have done so. . . . I have authorized

the establishment of the 'Einstein War Resisters International Fund.'"

Einstein deplored the fact that many leading scientists contributed to mankind's self-destruction by producing instruments of war, and he wondered whether those men of science could not prevent the outbreak of further wars by their joint refusal to use their talents for war. Imbued with an idealism that some will call naive while others may describe it as "prophetic," he wrote letters to the outstanding scientists in all countries, asking them to meet with him and to discuss the possibility of preventing further wars. Einstein was shocked to learn that only a handful of scientists cared to answer his appeal affirmatively, whereas the vast majority either did not answer or called his plan hopelessly utopian.

It was only Hitler's assumption of power that caused Einstein to modify his extreme views on pacifism. Realizing that this was not the time for upholding pacifist ideas ("When the time comes to preserve life then we have to fight back"), he persuaded himself that the Fascists would stop at nothing, and that the present civilization would be destroyed by the new barbarians if they would not be crushed in time. Having left Germany shortly before Hitler had become chancellor of the Reich, Einstein demonstratively broke all his relationships with the Reich and resigned from the Prussian Academy. Thereupon he received a peculiar letter from that institution: Not only did the Academy regret his action, but it had even expected him, Einstein, to range himself "on the side of the defenders of our nation against the flood of lies which has been let loose upon it. . . . A good word for the German people from you in particular would have produced the greatest effect—especially abroad."

Einstein who, as an exile in Belgium, had learned everything that could be known about the maltreatment of Jews, liberals, leftists and other enemies of the Third Reich, answered this hypocritical and shameless letter with a brief epistle which burned with indignation and anger:

"Such a testimony as you suggest would have been equivalent to a repudiation of all those notions of justice and

liberty for which I have stood all my life. Such testimony would not be, as you put it, a good word for the German nation; on the contrary, it would only have helped the cause of those who are seeking to undermine the ideas and principles which have won for the German nation a place of honor in the civilized world. By giving such testimony in these present circumstances, I should have been contributing, even if only indirectly, to the barbarization of manners and the destruction of all existing cultural values."

Once Nazism had forced Einstein to alter his views, he continued to fight the Brown Plague as a humanist as well as in his capacity of a scientist. As is commonly known by now, it was Einstein's early discovery that under certain conditions matter could be changed into energy and vice versa, which enabled the scientists to construct the atomic bomb. Worried about the possibility that the Nazis might produce the weapon before the Americans, Einstein, in August 1939, wrote a letter to President Roosevelt saying that a bomb could be produced which, "exploded in a port . . . might very well destroy the whole port together with the surrounding territory." Fortunately, Einstein's advice to accelerate research on the practical use of uranium did not fall on deaf ears, so that six years after the scientist had mailed his letter the first atomic bomb was dropped from a U. S. airplane.

Although the war ended with an Allied victory, Einstein did not stop worrying about the state of the world. He fully agreed with that bright American high school boy, who, in an essay, summed up the gigantic problem caused by the terrible new weapon in one sentence—"The Atomic Age is here to stay—are we?" Last year Einstein developed a plan for the preservation of peace despite atomic bombs:

"I am in favor of inviting the Russians to join a world government authorized to provide security," he told Raymond Swing, "and if they are unwilling to join, to proceed to establish supranational security without them. Let me admit quickly that I see great peril in such a course. If it is adopted it must be done in a way to make it utterly clear that the new regime is not a combination

of power against Russia. It must be a combination that, by its composite nature, will greatly reduce the chances of war. It will be more diverse in its interests than any single state, thus less likely to resort to aggressive or preventive war. It will be dedicated to a supranational security, and thus escape the emphasis on national supremacy which is so strong a factor in war."

Warning the U. S. A. that other nations, too, will be able to produce the bomb, Einstein continued as follows:

"Unless Americans come to recognize that they are not stronger in the world because they have the bomb, but weaker because of their vulnerability to atomic attack, they are not likely to conduct their policy at Lake Success or in their relations with Russia in a spirit that furthers the arrival of an understanding."

Thus spoke the Sage of Princeton, the seer whom this country is honoring with

the "One World Award." Thus spoke the greatest Jew of our time, who once stated his credo as a Jew in these words:

"The striving after knowledge for its own sake, the love of justice verging on fanaticism, and the quest for personal independence—these are the motivating traditions of the Jewish people which cause me to regard my adherence to them as a gift of destiny. Those who rage today against the ideals of reason and of individual freedom, and seek to impose an insensate state slavery by means of brutal force, rightly see in us their irreconcilable opponents. History has imposed upon us a severe struggle. But as long as we remain devoted servants of truth, justice and freedom, we shall not only continue to exist as the oldest of all living peoples, but we shall also, as hitherto, create, through productive effort, values which shall contribute to the ennobling of mankind."

LAND FOR DEFENSE

By HARRY LEVIN

The importance of land—settled and cultivated land—as a part of defense, cannot be too strongly emphasized in Jewish Palestine. If, for example, there were a network of settlements between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, instead of the bare half-dozen now existing, the danger of cutting communications between Jerusalem and the coastal area would be far less threatening.

DURING the 1936-39 riots, when Arab-produced food was difficult to get, Jews intensified their own production. The World War speeded up this process. In Palestine, Jewish farmers also fought Hitler with the plow. In 1936, only 25% of the food consumed by the Jewish population was produced in Jewish settlements. Today this percentage has risen to 43. The rise is due to increased areas of land settled by the Jews, and to modern farming methods.

Palestine had 172 Jewish farming settlements covering 2,000,000 acres in 1936. Nineteen percent of the Jewish population at that time were farmers. Today there are 305 settlements cultivating 3,200,000 acres. The percentage of

farmers has declined to 12.2—yet there is more food produced, due to improved and intensified cultivation. The Yishuv still has a long way to go to reach reasonable self-sufficiency in food from its own sources, but there has been progress along that road.

Today, with each new attack on Jewish communications or settlements, the strategic role of land in defense becomes clearer. Ten years ago, Tirat Zvi, the only settlement in Southern Beisan, was attacked. Some 40 Arabs broke through the guard and reached the gates. The attack was repulsed, but only by a narrow margin.

Consider what happened in the latest attack on Tirat Zvi in February. Five to six hundred Arabs, many of them Syrian regular soldiers with experienced officers, assaulted the settlement. They were thrown back long before they came anywhere near the gates. In a sharp counter-attack, the Haganah killed 57 of the enemy and wounded many more than this number.

Has Tirat Zvi become so much stronger in these ten years? Not at all. But in

[Continued on page 27]

EIGHT weeks before pesach, even while there was still frost in the air, my grandfather would start talking about pesach. He didn't say very much. He would stand in the kitchen doorway, stroking his graying beard and say, "What's going to be done about pesach?" And then, he'd nod his head once or twice and bemoan my brother Ezra who refused to wear a yarmulka.

That was all he did. My grandmother was the one who worked. No matter what she said to him, or how, he would do only certain things in the house. And there was no changing him.

He wouldn't even go out shopping with us for new dresses. That was the first thing we did for pesach, shop for new dresses. There were six of us. We wore blue serge, and navy-blue kashmir, and changeable silk, depending upon whether we were of marriageable age. We carried them home in heavy boxes from the East Side, downtown, and hung them away in the closet, not to be touched, until pesach. The next time we went shopping it was for shoes, high button shoes, patent leather, sometimes, with a squeak. The shoes were always a little too tight for us when we got them home. I never knew why they always fitted so well in the store, and then, at home, they were tight, and the bigger girls had to break them in for us younger ones.

After we had our spring outfits, we started working on the house, one room at a time. My grandfather used to superintend the job in his own quiet way. He'd stand around, stroking his beard, watching me and my sisters and my mother climb on the walls, scour the corners, clean windows and put up freshly washed and starched curtains, and he would shake his head and threaten us with punishment if we dared bring chometz into that room after we had cleaned it. In his own way he gave our work glamor and point. Ah, pesach! It didn't matter to him that our hands were worn because we worked so hard. Little by little the house was closed up, and we were cramped in our quarters, rushed, got on each other's nerves, and yet terribly happy, anticipating pesach.

One room became the storehouse. Usually it was the front parlor. The closer it got to the holiday, the more cluttered it became. There were the

When the Pre-Pesach Days Caused A Happy Revolution in the Home—That Is the Way It Used to Be

THE WAY IT USED TO BE

By **BERDIE BECK**

fresh matzohs. My grandfather used to take my grandmother and go down to Meyer London's factory, on the East Side, and wait outside, while they baked the matzohs, then carry the boxes home and put it in the front parlor. Pesach was such a welcome guest! Near the matzohs was the big earthenware jug of pesachdike fat. Milk and butter were not pesachdik in those days, and everything we ate was made with fat. My grandmother used to get the fattest chickens she could buy for months before pesach, and kosher them in the front parlor, in the big white pesachdike veg-shaft, and sprinkle them with coarse salt, then save the fat to render in a pesachdike pot. We languished on shmaltz chickens for weeks, until we hated the sight of fowl.

The grocer brought up a case of eggs, twenty dozen, which we usually finished down to the last one in eight days. Everything had to be made with eggs: chremself, lotkes, matzohbrei, farfel—you knew there were eggs in them, and they tasted so geshmak!

A week before pesach we started on the pantry shelves. My grandmother had to do the work herself. First the wood had to be scoured with hot water and a stiff brush. Then a kettle of hot water was poured over it. We had a heavy, old, flatiron, and it had to be heated over a low flame on the gas range, the handle covered with three heavy flannel layers to protect your hand from the heat. My grandmother used to rub the boards with it until they were dry. What if it took all of one precious morning? What was there to compare with a kosher pesach?

By that time the front parlor was so full we had to put some things on the pantry shelf: a five-pound box of matzohs, in the lovely yellow paper, the matzoh meal, which we used for making those lovely light sponge cakes. (And without the help of electric mixers!) Sugar was kosher for passover only in

the solid, blue-paper packaged horn, and we used to have to hew chunks out of it with knife and fork. Delicious! the yellows, and the blues, and the clean sweetness of the pantry shelves! Oh pesach!

My grandmother used to grind her own pepper, and her own ginger and her own cinnamon, and she was fragrant with the spices, and sweet to kiss and so good to us little girls. She made candy out of carrots for us, spiced with ginger, and candy out of beets, cut in strings, and covered with cinnamon. There was sugared orange peel, and grapefruit peel, hard to chew and tart on the tongue.

In the living room there now stood a barrel of borsht, fermenting for weeks, giving the parlor a slightly sour aroma. Everywhere we went in the house we smelled pesach. But the most fun we had was with the fish in the bathtub. It was usually a live karp, and the water was always running, cold, like a song, with the overflow making echoes in the hollow pipe of the drain. We used to sit on our knees for hours, watching that fish, wondering how we were ever going to eat it.

My grandmother had to keep the fish alive to have it fresh for the seder. There were no refrigerators then, and the ice box couldn't become pesachdik until the last minute. The front parlor was cold, but not cold enough for fish.

When we scoured out the bottom shelves of the pantry for the dishes, we used to sing. Those dishes! Maybe they weren't china. They were blue and white, and each one was counted. Each one of us had our own glass cup for wine. Mine was rough outside and it had a little glass handle. I had it for twenty-five years. We stayed home from school to polish the flatware, with sand. My grandfather would spread a clean white paper on the big kitchen table and sit us down before

it, making first sure that we had no chometz about us, and set us to the job of polishing.

At last, it was the day before pesach. My grandfather had his candle and his feather and his wooden spoon, and after putting pieces of bread, carefully, one in each room, he would lead us around, making a complete tour of the house we had already cleaned and made pesachdik, collecting the pieces of bread, with a prayer. Always, everything my grandfather did, was with a prayer. When he tasted food, when he looked at us in sickness, when he came into the house after the Sabbath, or when he went to sleep—always, with a prayer. His voice echoed through the house, just as my grandmother's love embraced us, wherever we stood.

But the day of the seder! Like the day of a wedding! The chometz was out of the house immediately after our early breakfast. Charosis to make! My grandfather wore a clean white apron over his pants. His vest was open, and he had no tie under his beard. He made the charosis. I peeled the apples, and as he prepared the charosis I ate it, surreptitiously, thinking he didn't see me. There is nothing so delicious in the world as pesachdike charosis. Even the bitter herbs were not bitter. My grandfather broiled the egg and the chicken's neck himself. There were some things he didn't trust my grandmother to make. With the kitchen scoured, and the stove clean and covered, pesach came out into the kitchen, openly. And all the preparation for the eight weeks was nothing compared to the work of getting ready for the seder.

We were six, counting my brother Ezra, who refused to wear a hat in the house. My aunts would come, with their babies; they would be alike to me, laid out on the beds, with chairs, to keep them from rolling off. All my aunts seemed to have babies around pesachtime. Sometimes the children used to cry in the bedroom. If one cried, they all cried, and when they got tired, they all seemed to get tired and keep still at once.

Sometimes a few of my aunts used to help us set the table. Ah, those beautiful Passover blue and white dishes on that white tablecloth! Why is a pesachdik knadle so delicious in a blue and white pesachdik soup plate?

We always had one or two hungry strangers for guests, men usually, who were very careful of what they said, and spoke only the thick, guttural Yiddish of greenhorns. And when they got up from the table to wash their hands they said to one another, "This isn't America at all. This is like our home. I thought that in America pesach would be different."

•

My grandfather used to watch us all out of the corner of his eyes. He had an old haggadah, and he used to read from it, but I'm sure he knew it all by heart. He knew, too, when we skipped anything. We were afraid to arouse his anger. He looked so kingly in his white yarmilke, and his white robe—kittle, he called it—with his beard combed and his finger nails clean. He sat high above us, on two chairs, with two pillows under him, making every effort to lean on them, as the good rule says, but finding it hard, because he was a stern man, accustomed to holding himself upright. On his right was his oldest son, and on down the long table, where the rest of us sat, according to our ages. My grandmother was at the foot of the table, near the kitchen door, looking very gay in her pesachdik dress when she remembered to look gay. Some of us could see how tired she was. Maybe it was because he saw her weariness that my brother Ezra consented to wear a hat at the seder. If she could almost kill herself for pesach, he could wear a hat.

Most of us fell asleep after supper. But my grandfather used to wake us up in time to sing Hagadyah. "Louder!" he would urge us, his deep baritone startling us into wakefulness. Everyone in the neighborhood knew it was pesach in our house because they heard us. If we couldn't see the words with our sleep-filled eyes, we shouted the melody, and felt happy all over.

When the seder was over my aunts usually ran home with their babies. We were left to wash the dishes and put them away. Only one more seder left, we thought, with regret—and with thankfulness.

The second seder found us all together again. Only the sparkle was gone. The tablecloth was soiled with wine and salt water. The Haggadah went more quickly. We were not so sleepy; we sang

all the words of the songs and wondered what they meant, intending to ask, and then forgetting, when all the babies started crying at once.

The rest of pesach was like a game; we wore our dresses that had grown too tight on us, and our new shoes that squeaked, and we played games with filberts and ate nothing without chicken fat, with matzohs, and without, and loved it.

Reluctantly, we put away the dishes. My grandmother did it herself. She used to say aloud, "The hands that put these away should take them down again next year."

And my grandfather, in the kitchen doorway, his hand to his beard, would say, "Amen!"

Rabbis Explore the Agunah Problem

JEWISH marriage laws, as they exist today, are fluid enough to prevent undue hardship on the part of the Agunah, according to Rabbi Louis Epstein, one of America's leading authorities on Jewish law. An Agunah is a Jewish woman whose husband has disappeared, but whose death cannot be absolutely verified.

Rabbi Epstein made this statement at a recent conference on Jewish law held at the Jewish Theological Seminary under the sponsorship of the Rabbinical Assembly of America, and attended by rabbis from every part of the country.

"Those who wish to modify the marriage law by new and radical legislation," Rabbi Epstein said, "must recognize that legislation requires authority, which we have not and which no other existing body of rabbis can now claim. Without authority one can defy the law but cannot change it. The woman who marries a second husband without a *get* (divorce) from her first husband does not change the law; the rabbi or group of rabbis who sanction it, with as little authority as the woman has, are equally violators of the law, not legislators.

"One has the right, however, to hope that out of the flux of our time a new Jewish state may be born and that a new supreme judicial body may come into being. Such a body may dedicate itself to the task of making our holy laws operative normally in the life of a normal people."

S EDER over Grandpa's was always an occasion for us. Through the years we remembered it as the grand event of the year—with Grandpa enthroned at the head of the table, chanting the services in his mellifluous voice. Of late, however, though we had continued to gather at his house, others—his son and his grandsons—took a more active part in the service, and it now took on more of a social character, for we freely interspersed conversation with our prayers. This was something Grandpa had never allowed, but he was a very old man now, and we treated him with the indulgence we adults reserve for the very young and the very old.

Just now my Uncle Mark was reading. The Hebrew did not come easily to him, and he had no expert memory of the verses, as Grandpa had. Stopping to catch his breath at the end of a long passage through which he had stumbled rather hurriedly, he raised his head and commented on something he had seen in the newspaper which seemed apropos to him.

My Uncle Mark remembered two depressions, two wars, and butcheries in Europe too numerous to retain their distinctive character in his mind. He was inclined by nature to be pessimistic.

"You can't deny it," he told us at the Seder table. "It's all in the cards—we're headed for the worst depression we've ever seen. Can't be more than a year off."

I shivered a little, inwardly. I had just gone back to school after four years in the army. It would just be my luck to run into something like a depression.

The others at the table were not listening to our conversation. "I still think it's too blustery to bring the baby out," said my cousin Joan. "After all, he's only ten weeks old."

"What's that you say?" asked Grandpa. He leaned forward in the overstuffed chair which had been provided for him at the table, and fixed his eyes upon Joan.

"Nothing—nothing at all. I said you were looking fine, Grandpa." She raised her voice. Actually she was his great-granddaughter only by marriage.

"I didn't have a good winter," said Grandpa to no one in particular. "Dr. Shaw said I had a bad case of the flu.

A Short Story of A Passover Today—and An Old Man Who Remembered

SALUTATIONS

By SYLVAN KARCHMER

But I told him not to worry. I wasn't going to die."

He chuckled softly to himself and nodded his lean white head up and down. "I told Dr. Shaw I wasn't going to die until I had my first great-great-grandson at my table for seder."

He turned to survey the group on either side of him. His daughter Sarah was here, and Mark, his only surviving son; the rest of us were grandsons and granddaughters and great-children. Four of his own children were dead, and he was the last of his generation in the entire community. This pesach he would be ninety-five, or perhaps, ninety-six. He didn't know himself. Since my return from the army I couldn't get over how shrunken he looked—yet, staring at him as the others chatted now, I knew he had not changed much since my first definite recollection of him. His hair had thinned a little and grown finer, more silken; his hearing had faded; his skin a rosier hue, but he could still read his Yiddish newspapers and sometimes he played a game of checkers with my cousins Ben and Harry.

He was talking about the baby now. "They say he looks like a Joachim," he said. "They were my people," he explained to some of the in-laws, who were not familiar with the ramifications of his huge old family. "I am anxious to have him at the table."

Ben was the baby's father. He got up and touched Grandpa's shoulder. "He's sleeping now—you wouldn't want us to wake him."

"But I haven't seen him yet," fretted Grandpa.

"Just as soon as he wakes up," promised Ben, "we'll bring him downstairs to the table."

"They say he's a handsome baby," said Grandpa. "If he looks like the Joachims, he's sure to be a pretty child. What did you name him?"

"He's forgotten," said Mark to me. "Ben told him when he came in."

"Joseph," said Ben again, talking loud in Grandpa's ear.

"Joseph—Joseph," repeated Grandpa. His white head was raised questioningly. "After whom did you name him?" he demanded.

We looked at each other and shook our heads. Poor old Grandpa, we thought. Joseph was Mark's brother and Grandpa's youngest son. He had been dead over twenty-five years. None of us wished to speak of these things to Grandpa, and Uncle Mark started talking about the coming depression. But Grandpa's mind was on names. "Daniel would have been a good name," he said. "My oldest brother," he explained to us. He stopped and his small eyes peered around the table. Propped on the overstuffed chair, with the white pillows to his left, he looked like a kind of pink mummy—and incredibly small.

"I wanted to name one of my own sons after my brother Daniel," he said, "but then we did not know he was dead. They took him in the Czar's army and we never heard about him. He was lost to us."

Uncle Mark switched from the coming depression to anti-Semitism. "It's going to be the worst yet," he said. "I don't know how we're going to fight it."

Grandpa, now talking softly to himself, said, "Daniel was a beautiful name. He was my oldest brother. I remember the time he was Bar Mitzvah. We were afraid to have too much of a celebration, because we knew the Czar's soldiers would come for him if they knew he was of age for the army." He sat still for a minute, brooding quietly over the past. "They did come, too, and we never saw him again."

Joan said, "He's the nicest baby. I wish you could have seen how beautifully he behaved when we had his picture made." She opened her purse.

"Here, Grandpa, here's a picture of Joseph."

"Joseph," he echoed, his small, round eyes growing tiny and thoughtful again. "Joseph, my son," he whispered, a painful onrush of memories sweeping over him.

"But aren't you going to look at the picture, Grandpa?" I asked.

"No," he replied. "I don't want to see any pictures. I want the baby here. I told Dr. Shaw I wasn't going to die. I said I've lived this long—through all the bad times and all the bad things they've done to us—I said I'm going to live a few more years. That's what I told Dr. Shaw. I said I must have the infant at my table on Passover."

He sighed and his voice grew hardy. "To have him at our table will be a good sign. It means we will go on. I was sixteen when I told my parents goodbye—it was a cold night, and I hid under the straw in the wagon until we came to the border. They wept, the old folks, my parents—peace be unto them—but I was too excited to understand . . . for I was coming to America."

"Yep," said Uncle Mark. "Good thing for all of us he came over. Where would we be if he had stayed over there!"

Now Grandpa's thoughts were roaming the past again. "One day my boy Joseph came to me. He was in a uniform—he said he was going to the old country—he was going to fight in a war"

"Grandpa, that was the other war," said Ben. "The one in which Uncle Joseph was killed."

Grandpa hesitated for a minute, his fingers trembling a little as they touched the wine glass on the white cloth before him. I wondered if he had forgotten this was pesach eve. Then his frail shoulders shrugged. "They were all the same, the wars," he said. "Always bloodshed and pogroms . . . Who was killed in the war we just had? I had four grandsons to go. In the shule on the flag there are four stars. Always I look at the flag when I go into the shule."

"Don't you remember I went," said Ben. "I came here that day when you were sitting on the porch in the sunshine."

"Yes," said Grandpa, "I remember all of you who went."

"I hear him," cried Joan, jumping up

from the table. "I think the baby's getting up."

In a few minutes she and the nurse came back downstairs. The nurse was carrying the baby on a blue silk coverlet, and the baby's head rested on a white lacy pillow.

"Let me hold him," said Grandpa, and his voice quivered. "Let me hold him on my knee."

"Oh, Ben," exclaimed Joan. "I was afraid he'd want to."

Grandpa had risen from his chair, and he could not stop the violent shaking of his hands. Ben leaned over. "Why don't you let the nurse put him on the pillows right next to you?"

The baby started to whimper. "There, there, precious," soothed Joan.

Grandpa said, "Let me take him, the little man. Why can't I hold him." His voice sounded hurt.

"He's got it in his head. We'll have to let him now." Ben moved closer to the baby.

"Watch him," cautioned Uncle Mark. "He may drop the baby." He had been talking about Palestine to me. "First they give it to us—then they take it away." He shook his head dolefully. "There will always be trouble over there."

Grandpa pushed his chair back from the table. It had been a long time since he had held an infant in his arms. We could see he was making an effort to keep his hands from shaking, but it wasn't any use. "He looks like my second son Aaron," he declared. "He's smiling, too. He's not afraid for me to hold him."

"Grandpa, don't you want Joan to take him now?"

"No," replied Grandpa. "He is of hardy stock. My grandfather lived to be eighty-five. We do not die so easily."

We all were silent watching him hold the baby, except Uncle Mark, who was still voicing his fears about Palestine.

"A hardy stock," repeated Grandpa, rocking the infant on his knee. "He lived to be eighty-five, and his father once journeyed to Vilna to ask the Gaon a question. Yes, he talked to the Rabbi Elijah. He was a great rabbi, the Vilna Gaon. He was like a saint. It strengthened one to talk with him."

And then he was quiet again, ignoring our presence, as he picked up the

Hagadah. What was he thinking, I wondered, listening with half an ear to Uncle Mark. My cousins and I had been through a war . . . but it seemed it was not completely behind us. In Palestine there was a war on this very seder night; in London our shop windows had been broken, our synagogues defiled; and in America . . . Suppose Uncle Mark was right—suppose all that we had seen, all that we had been through in the war, still loomed ahead of us. Outside I heard the blustery March wind, whipping at the corners of Grandpa's old house.

The baby whimpered again; Joan made an attempt to take him, but Grandpa rocked him gently on his feeble, shrunken knee.

"Now," said Grandpa, and a smile played around the corners of his wrinkled, aged mouth, and he passed the infant back to Ben. "You must tell him this—someday, when he can understand. Tell him that he sat at his great-grandfather's seder table."

He raised his head and peered at us around the circle. "Tell him too that one of his ancestors talked with the Vilna Gaon."

Then he sat back, as if the speech had exhausted him. "He should know that," he added. "In our family that is something we must not forget."

But why? I wondered to myself, out of a century of memories . . . He had seen the armies of Nicholas I conscript his brother; he remembered the May Laws, and the slaughter in Nazi Germany. Out of a lifetime lived amid tears and ever-multiplying anxieties . . . What a strange thing to remember!

I raised my head and looked at Grandpa. His old eyes, tired with seeing the woes of a century, were still bright. He was smiling in the direction of Uncle Mark, who for once remained very quiet.

"We have much to say," said Grandpa. "We should not be wasting our time. Come, boys," he continued, and picking up the Hagadah in his trembling fingers, he found the place, and without waiting for the rest of us to catch up with him, he commenced nimbly to chant—and all the while, his alert old eyes were smiling, smiling—first at Uncle Mark and then at Ben . . . and me . . . and the infant . . . as if they held a rare and precious secret.

NEW BOOKS

Talmudic Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, Jerusalem. American Agency, Bloch Publishing Co.

THE first volume of this gigantic enterprise, the publication of an encyclopedia of all the laws and doctrines in the Talmud, which has recently appeared, is the best evidence of the creative genius of Palestine Jewry and shows how great is the zeal for Jewish learning in that new and vibrant Jewish community in Eretz Yisroel.

It is a work that was greatly needed. Every concept of law, every decision, is here not only recorded but discussed in all its development and ramifications. It is the work of a group of great scholars, and shows how painstaking they were in their efforts to make this encyclopedia worthy of the best traditions in Jewish scholarship. The work when completed will consist of twelve or thirteen volumes, and the forthcoming books are to appear at regular intervals. The head of this venture and the chief editor is Rabbi Meir Berlin, the world leader of the Mizrahi Zionist Organization, and the first volume is a magnificent tribute to his scholarship, organizing ability, and venturesome spirit.

To fully appreciate the cultural status of the Palestinian Yishuv, it is interesting to learn that even in these dark days of struggle, more than 2500 copies of this encyclopedia were sold there within a few months after its publication.

Let us hope that American Jewry will strive to match this record in supporting a work that will do much to reveal the incalculable treasures that have been the heritage of Israel from time immemorial.

Toldot Ha-Poskim—History of Jewish Codes, 3 volumes, by Prof. Chaim Tchernowitz (Rav Tzair). Published by Jubilee Committee, New York.

This monumental work by one of the foremost Rabbinic scholars of our day, Prof. Tchernowitz, will add further laurels to those he has already gained. The English title of the work does not do it full justice. It is more than a history of the authoritative codes of Jewish law; it is a history of Jewish law in the entire period of its codification, from

the days of the early *Geonim* until the *Shulchan Aruch* and its commentators. The author gives us an analysis of the principles and the methods that guided the codifiers in the compilation of Jewish laws and in their decisions of Jewish law. The reader is referred to the special article in tribute to this great teacher, written by Rabbi Jacob Minkin, which will appear in a forthcoming issue of the *Center Review*, for a more detailed review and appreciation of this great work. It is a tribute to the scholarship and to the fascinating style of this aged teacher, who happily is still called *Rav Tzair*—the youthful rabbi.

The work has been published by a special Jubilee Committee in token of American Jewry's affection to this scholar on his seventy-fifth birthday. May he continue to enrich our Hebrew culture for many years to come.

The Mishnah O Berakoth, Peab, Demai—English Translation by Jacob David Herzog. Bloch Publishing Co.

This is a work that will be welcomed by all Jews who wish to become familiar with part of the rich storehouse of our Rabbinic literature. The *Mishnah* represents the first collection of Rabbinic teachings, after the Bible. It is the foundation of all the later Rabbinic discussions that comprise the *Gemara*, and which, together with the *Gemara*, make up the *Talmud*.

The present volume gives us the Hebrew text of the first three tractates of the *Mishnah*, together with an excellent English translation. In addition to the usual classic Hebrew commentary of R. Obadiah of Bertinoro, it has an illuminating commentary in English by the translator, Rabbi Jacob David Herzog, who, by the way, is the son of Palestine's Chief Rabbi, Dr. Isaac Herzog.

The work is made more valuable in that it gives to the scholarly student all the variant readings of the text found in the different manuscripts, and other important notes on the text, by the Fellows of the Harry Fischel Talmud Institute in Jerusalem.

Reviewed by DR. ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL

This volume was originally published in Jerusalem, and is now presented as the first American edition. It represents the zeal and devotion to our literary heritage on the part of the Rabbis in Palestine, and their fine appreciation of the need of bringing this classic literature closer to the English-speaking Jewries of America and Britain.

Intelligent Jews, especially those who would like to have some understanding of the teachings of the Talmud, and those who are interested in the study of jurisprudence, would do well to secure this volume, which reveals true scholarship, fine literary use of the English language, and which has succeeded in rendering into a fluent English the intricate expressions of Jewish law.

Yvri Anokbi (I Am a Hebrew), by Daniel Persky

This reviewer doubts if there is a Jew anywhere who is more wholeheartedly devoted to the Hebrew language and Hebrew culture than the author of this interesting book, Daniel Persky. He has already enriched our Hebrew literature with a number of fascinating volumes and studies.

The author possesses a unique style. He can treat a most serious subject—a question of philosophy or grammar or ancient usage—in a most popular manner, so that the average reader can get the import of his message. More than that, he possesses a rich sense of humor, so that each essay is adorned with a flash that is humorous and often brilliant.

This volume is unique in yet another way. It is entirely devoted to problems dealing with the Hebrew language, literature and culture. There is hardly a question dealing with the revival of Hebrew, which he does not discuss. The question of pronunciation—Sephardic or Ashkenazic—the question of the proper use of foreign terminology, the problem of punctuation, the question of the use of Aramaic expressions in current Hebrew—and hundreds of similar problems, are

discussed with great insight, learning and wisdom.

Above all, as one reads these essays, one cannot help but feel the great love that burns in the heart of the Hebraist for our old-new language. The quotation, which the author has inscribed on the title page, taken from the great poet, Jeudah Leib Gordon, is most certainly applicable to him and reveals him in truest color—*Eved Lo'Ivrit Onocbi Ad Netzach*, "I am a servant of Hebrew for all time."

This is a volume that will give instruction and delight to the reader, and will be welcomed by all who treasure the Hebrew word.

Igrot Sofrim Ivrim (Letters of Hebrew Writers), edited by Dr. Max Raisin. Published by Israel Matz.

Some time ago, Mr. Israel Matz, the great Maecenas of Hebrew literature, acquired a treasury of letters written by many of the writers of the Haskalah period—of two and three generations ago. Most of them are addressed to the Hebrew publisher, Abraham Zuckerman, of Warsaw. These, together with many letters addressed to Mr. Matz himself by many of the leading Hebrew writers of our generation, have been collected and edited in this volume by Dr. Max Raisin, the well-known Rabbi and Hebrew writer.

The editor has also incorporated many letters which he received from some of the outstanding figures in Hebrew literature.

The letters reveal a close picture of their authors' innermost self, their everyday problems and how they faced them. The style, of course, differs with the personality of the writer. Some write in the flowery style of the classic era, some in very simple and direct manner, others with hints and allusions to Biblical and Rabbinic quotations. Most of them deal with money problems, and the financial difficulties endured by many of these writers. Some deal with personal matters, such as one would write to an intimate friend without suspecting that they would ever be read by others. One writer asks that the addressee should give him a true report about a young woman, whose name has been suggested to him for marriage and who dwelt in his town. "Tell me the truth," he writes. "Is she pretty or ugly, for I could not endure life with

a woman who was ugly, and I hear rumors that frighten me." It is intimate touches like these that add a special interest to the volume. Most of the letters received by Mr. Matz show the great debt that the writers owed to this prince of Hebrew culture, who, for more than a generation supported Hebrew writers with an open heart and hand, and enabled them to publish their writings.

The volume is lovingly dedicated to the beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. Matz—Sidney Matz—who met a tragic death more than a year ago.

Toldot Hachinnuch B'Yisroel B'Dorot Ho-Achronim (History of Jewish Education in Modern Times), Vol. II, by Prof. Zevi Scharfstein. Ogen Publishing Co.

This is the second volume of a most important work undertaken by one of the eminent authorities in the field of Hebrew education of our day, Prof. Scharfstein. This reviewer has already had the opportunity to appraise the value of the work when the first volume appeared several years ago, and he can now but add to the praises sung before. The second volume, which deals with the history of Jewish education in the Mediterranean countries (outside of Palestine), England and the United States, reveals the same careful and diligent research which marked the first volume. Every phase of Jewish education is described, every effort is interpreted, the progress and failure of every venture is recounted.

Despite the specialized subject and its

scholarly treatment, the volume makes interesting reading. Certainly those who want to be familiar with the problems of Jewish education must make this study required reading.

Yotze Safrut Hayelodim Shelonu—Hebrew Writers for Children—by Zevi Scharfstein. Shilo Publishing Co.

This little volume is a fascinating resume of the rich Hebrew literature for children which has appeared in the last two or three generations. Prof. Scharfstein, in the opening sentence of his chapter on Bialik, gives the theme of the entire work: One of the principal foundation stones on which every national culture is built is the poetry for children." And in each chapter he shows the richness of our Hebrew culture in this field. It is interesting to find that the authors, whose names have won fame for their great writings both in poetry and prose, have also given of their genius in special writings for children. This volume will be welcomed by all Hebrew educators, and by all parents who want to enrich the lives of the children with the beauties of Hebrew story and song—the creations of the great masters of the Hebrew word.

A review and discussion by Rabbi Levinthal of Rabbi Jacob Levinson's recently published volume of Responsa, "A Word in Due Season," under the title of "Jewish Laws and the Problem of Jewish Law," will appear in an early issue of the *Center Review*.

PIONEER OF MODERN HEBREW

By LEO SHPALL

ONE of the young dreamers who was inspired with the ideal of Jewish Nationalism and of a revival of Hebrew as a national language, was Eliezer Ben Yehudah, who died twenty-five years ago.

A man of energy and action, Ben Yehudah went to Paris and entered a medical school with the ultimate purpose of settling in Palestine.

It was during his residence there that he made his entry into the field of Hebrew literature with an article, "An Important Question," in which he advocated the return to Palestine as the only solu-

tion of the Jewish problem. He maintained that the Jews could foster their national spirit and the Hebrew language only in their own land.

In a second article, he asserted that Jews were unfit for national life because they didn't speak a common language. "And have we not such a language," he wrote, "in which we can write whatever we have in mind, and which we can speak if only we will it?" He believed that the Jewish people could make this dream a reality. Unfortunately illness interrupted his activities for a while, but

[Continued on page 25]

CENTER CELEBRATES RABBI LEVINTHAL'S 60th BIRTHDAY

A Report on the Happy Events and Publication of the Addresses

ONE of the finest celebrations of the long line of such events the Brooklyn Jewish Center has known took place on April 6 and 7. On the two evenings of these dates the Center celebrated the 60th birthday of its rabbi, Dr. Israel H. Levinthal. Dr. Levinthal reached the age of 60 on February 12, but because so many of the Center members were winter vacationing the birthday party was postponed.

The Anniversary Committee, headed by Dr. Moses Spatt, arranged a reception for the entire membership on Tuesday evening, April 7, and a testimonial dinner by members of the Board of Trustees and Governing Board on the following evening.

The warmth and high regard that these events brought out was inspiring to all who took part in them—and those included the majority of the Center membership. It is not often that a rabbi of a synagogue can develop in his congregation such affection and admiration, and equally rare that a congregation can arouse in a rabbi such devotion as Dr. Levinthal has shown to the Center. The association of the minister and in his congregation has been truly a marriage of service on the highest levels.

A capacity audience of members filled the synagogue on Tuesday evening. Following the singing of "The Star Spangled Banner," and "Hatikvah," Rabbi Manuel Saltzman delivered the invocation and read greetings from the father of the guest of honor, Rabbi Bernard L. Levinthal, of Philadelphia, who was unable to be present because of illness. The English translation of this moving tribute by the dean of the American rabbinate is printed elsewhere in the *Review*.

The Chairman, Dr. Moses Spatt, delivered a brief address of welcome during which he said:

"Our Sages tell us that a man's teacher of Torah stands to him in the place of a parent, and, as his spiritual father, the teacher is entitled to the honor and reverence due to his actual father. It is in this spirit that we, members of this great Center family, meet this evening, to give honor and reverence to our spiritual father, Dr. Israel H. Levinthal. Providence has been good to our institution in that we have been blessed with his leadership from the very inception of the Center, almost thirty years ago. But his influence has been felt not only in our

own community but throughout the country."

own community but throughout the country."

JUDGE GREENBERG'S ADDRESS

Dr. Spatt then introduced the first speaker, Judge Emanuel Greenberg, President of the Center. Judge Greenberg's address follows:

"It is a fine privilege to pay tribute to our beloved Rabbi on this 60th birthday anniversary. It is a great personal privi-

A FATHER'S BLESSING

The revered father of our spiritual leader, Rabbi B. L. Levinthal, of Philadelphia, was unable to be with us at the memorable celebration of our rabbi's sixtieth birthday because of illness. From his sick bed, he sent the following beautiful prayer, which was read to the congregation by Rabbi Saltzman:

"**B'**NI bechori Yisroel asher becho espoer, l'yom holadt'cho ha Shishim Bamo avorechecho?

"Avorechecho bozeh, b'shishim ho'osios asher b'virkas kohanim. Sholom lecho, Sholom bra'ayoscho ho ahuvo ho'omedes liymincho. Sholom lakehilo, kehilas hakodesh, shehincho mechahen pe'er bekirboh zeh rabos beshonim.

"Yehi rotzon shelo sibotel b'shishim, u'sihiech keAvrohom Ovinu, asher b'hiyoso ben shishim hischil lidrosh borabim b'achdus Eloah.

"Zos hi birkas ovichoh, ohavcho umokircho."

* * *

"Israel, my beloved son, in whom I take great pride with what shall I bless you on this your sixtieth birthday?

"I will bless you with the sixty letters which according to our

Rabbis comprise the priestly blessing—May God bless you and keep you. May He cause His countenance to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May God lift His countenance towards you and grant you His blessing of peace. Peace unto you, Peace unto your dear and beloved wife who stands at your side. Peace unto the holy congregation which you have served with such glory for so many years.

"May it be the will of God that your physical strength and spiritual power will not be lost at sixty. May you be like Abraham, our Father, of whom we are told that at the age of sixty he began to preach and teach the principles of the true God.

"This is the blessing of your father, who loves you and to whom you are so dear."

lege as well, because Dr. Levinthal and I have been friends for many years, from the time he joined me in wedlock with my charming wife almost thirty-two years ago. Since then, he has taken part in our family celebrations and joys, as he has, no doubt, shared your happy events. He has been taken into and been made a part of our family life. We have learned to admire, cherish and love him dearly. And so, it is with much personal pleasure that I publicly attest to the love we all have for our Rabbi.

"Tonight, however, we pay tribute to him not only as an individual but as one who has been truly an exemplar of his noble calling, the rabbinate.

"There are some men in the ministry who are distinguished because of their learning. Others are fine authors and writers. Some are great preachers and

accomplishment. I do not refer to the physical structure of an institution, but rather to the life that goes on in it, and to all that it symbolizes.

"Dr. Levinthal has, over the years, been actively identified with many very important communal matters. He has been at the head of many movements of national and even international significance. He is a real living force, such as few men have been in American-Jewish life.

"To our Brooklyn Jewish Center, since its very inception, he has given of himself unstintingly and most unselfishly. At a great sacrifice to himself and to his family, he has devoted most of his time and attention to our growth and to our well-being. We have received much from our Rabbi. His rare wisdom, his sound advice, his benign influence have greatly

"We are deeply indebted to our Rabbi for all of that. The true value of that indebtedness can hardly be estimated. It is my profound pleasure to not only publicly acclaim our Rabbi for all that he has accomplished, but also to acknowledge our debt of gratitude, which no words of mine can adequately evaluate or describe.

"The officers, Trustees and Governing Board members, the officers of the Sisterhood and all of our members extend to you, Dr. Levinthal, our deepest and sincerest thanks for having served us so well. We all wish for you and for your dear wife and family and your revered father good health and happiness for many, many years, so that you may continue to be the forceful and benevolent influence in the life of our congregation, our community, our people, and our country."

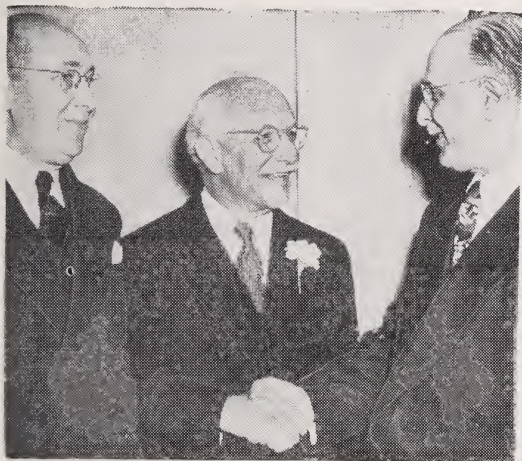
At this point in the reception, Cantor William Sauler, of the Center, sang several solos which were greatly enjoyed by the audience. Then came the heartfelt tribute of Rabbi Levinthal's brother, Judge Louis Levinthal of Philadelphia for the Levinthal family and also on behalf of the Zionists. An extract from speech is published in this issue.

The guest artist, Sidor Belarsky, then sang a number of Jewish folksongs in his inimitable style and was enthusiastically applauded.

The greetings of the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Alma Mater of Dr. Levinthal, and of the American rabbinate, were presented by Prof. Louis Finkelstein. Extracts from his address, too, are published in the *Review*.

A surprise feature of the evening was the unexpected appearance of Rubin Tucker, former cantor of the Center and now a leading tenor of the Metropolitan Opera House. He sang but one cantorial number, and so magnificently that he received an ovation.

The entire audience rose to its feet when the chairman presented the honored guest, Dr. Levinthal, and gave him an affectionate and rousing welcome. The rabbi was greatly moved by this reception, the stirring climax of many years of ardent labor. He delivered one of his masterful addresses, one that the membership will long remember. The text is



Dr. Levinthal at the membership reception. Left to right — Dr. Moses Spatt, Rabbi Levinthal, Judge Emanuel Greenberg.

orators, and others are notable leaders and organizers. Our Rabbi is the embodiment of them all.

"As to his learning and scholarly attainments, that has been highly appraised by those most qualified to do so. He has made his mark as an author and writer. As a preacher and orator, we of the Brooklyn Jewish Center, and numerous others who have been privileged to hear him, can testify to his great talents. And as to his leadership, just look about and you can see evidence of his

contributed to our progress. Much that we have accomplished was the result of his labor. And, so, today, as has been publicly and often acknowledged by leaders in all walks of life, local and national, Jewish and non-Jewish, our Center stands foremost among religious institutions in the country. Its standing of pre-eminence is a personal triumph for our spiritual leader. The Center is Dr. Levinthal's monument of accomplishment. And, we, its membership, reflect in his glory.

included in the speeches printed in this issue of the *Review*.

A prayer by Rabbi Mordecai H. Lewittes concluded the reception, after which the audience left the synagogue and passed the receiving line, where Dr. and Mrs. Levinthal stood in a bower of plants and flowers and greeted the members. The guests were then invited to the Auditorium and Dining Room for refreshments.

On Wednesday evening, April 7th, the members of the Board of Trustees and Governing Board and their wives assembled for a Testimonial Dinner to Dr. Levinthal. Unlike the celebration on Tuesday evening, this event was more intimate, and numbered men and women who have served the institution for many years.

Dr. Moses Spatt, the toastmaster, expressed his thanks to the members of the Committee on Arrangements, as well as to the Administrative Director, Mr. Joseph Goldberg, for their assistance in planning the entire celebration.

Mr. Samuel Rottenberg, Honorary President of the Center, recalled the incidents leading to the call extended to Dr. Levinthal in October 1919 to become the rabbi of the proposed institution. There were no other names in the minds of the founders, he said. It was taken for granted by everyone concerned that no one but Rabbi Levinthal would be the spiritual leader of the newly contemplated Center.

An excerpt from Mr. Rottenberg's remarks follow:

"Dr. Levinthal, I believe, is the richest man in our congregation, which is not lacking, thanks to God, Almighty, in wealth. Who of us has been so honored, or deserving of honor, as Dr. Levinthal? His life has been dedicated and consecrated to serving his people and humanity. As I reflect upon my life, I realize that there are two motivations in the life of man—altruistic service to our brethren, and the selfish accumulation of material possessions. Dr. Levinthal's life serves me as an example of the more meaningful and significant existence. If I could relive my life, I would try to live it in the manner of a Dr. Levinthal.

"It has been said in this congregation that I laud myself for having been the one to have proposed Dr. Levinthal as

the spiritual leader of this congregation, but I must say that I was merely God's instrument in bringing him to us. No one chose Dr. Levinthal for this work. It was taken for granted by all that he would be our rabbi. He was placed among us by destiny.

"As a Kohan, in all humility, I would like to bless our beloved rabbi with a priestly blessing, wishing him and his family long life and happiness"

The other former President, Mr. Isidor Fine, reminisced about the four years of his administration during which the Center had to struggle with problems of finance resulting in continuous reductions in employees' salaries to make ends meet.

Whenever he visits the institution, he continued, he marvels at its great accomplishments and achievements, for which he credits our beloved rabbi. He pictured the rabbi as a beautiful crown which adds lustre to the Center, and pleaded that the members should aspire to become worthy to wear such a crown.

The greetings of the Board of Trustees were extended by Mr. Max Herzfeld, a former officer and for many years a member of the Board.

Mr. Herzfeld stressed the importance of harmonious relations between rabbi and congregation, and reviewed the reasons for the especially happy relationship that has existed throughout the years of Dr. Levinthal's ministry in the Center. Continuing, he said:

"Now I ask myself: What is it that makes for this harmony and mutual respect? Of course, Dr. Levinthal is a scholar, learned in Torah and secular knowledge. But many a scholar has had difficulty with his congregation. I have just read a biographical essay on Saadia Gaon. Saadia was, I believe, the first systematic Jewish philosopher. At any rate, the first important Jewish philosopher. He made tremendous contributions to many fields of Jewish learning. But, notwithstanding his outstanding merits as a scholar, he was difficult to get along with. The exilarch, the civil ruler of the Jewish community, who had appointed Saadia Gaon of the Academy of Sura, removed him and Saadia was compelled to go into hiding.

"I find the reason for the very happy relations that have always existed between our rabbi and the Board in an address de-

livered by Dr. Levinthal to the rabbinical graduates of the Seminary. It is the address that Rabbi Minkin referred to in his article on Dr. Levinthal in last month's issue of the *Center Review*. I was present and heard this address and I want to give you two brief quotations from it. Dr. Levinthal advised the graduates on the prerequisite qualifications for success in the rabbinate and then admonished them as follows: "The day is gone when a man can say 'My people must respect me for I bear the title rabbi.' Titles only will not bring to you your people's esteem. You will receive it if you earn it." And, then, as final warning and advice, Dr. Levinthal said to these young rabbis: "You must be imbued with a divine passion to serve. I said serve advisedly. In the words of the Talmud, I, too, would exhort you: 'Do you think it is the role of rulership that I give you? It is service that I bequeath for you.' It is this divine passion to serve without any attempt to rule or dominate that has won Dr. Levinthal the respect, admiration, affection, reverence and esteem, not only of the Trustees but of the entire congregation and of all who know him.

Mr. Louis J. Gribetz then spoke on behalf of the Governing Board as one of the oldest members of that body.

In his intimate talk he said:

"We have almost exhausted the vocabulary of the language of banquets. We have had a full setting forth of what Dr. Levinthal is—his work and his life.

"This night, however, has more meaning than merely an indulgence in the agreeable task of paying tributes of admiration. Dr. Levinthal has a message for all of us. He is teaching us how to meet 'old age.' At 60 he is serene, genial, cheerful and possessed of a freshness and a vigor of youth.

"Of course, Dr. Levinthal has had much experience in the art of becoming a 'zaken.' According to the Talmud, 'the zaken is he who has acquired wisdom.'

Because of lack of space the REVIEW feature, "News of the Month," had to be omitted.

From this standpoint, Dr. Levinthal was a 'zaken' many years ago.

"Our Rabbi has a message for the Rabbinate. His success in the ministry has demonstrated that the Jewish people long for the light, sunshine and healing of our traditions. For a period of almost 40 years, he has applied to contemporary current life and problems the wisdom of our Sages. He has taught us that Jewish literature is an inexhaustible mine of treasures.

"Dr. Levinthal coincides with two great wars which brought mental confusion and deep unrest to us. At a time when the average man was occupied almost exclusively with the function of matter, and when religion appeared to be a casualty of war, Rabbi Levinthal showed the healing courage, the beauty and the bright promise that the Jewish religion has for us even today."

The Center Sisterhood, through its President, Mrs. Maurice Bernhardt, presented the rabbi with a certificate of two scholarships awarded at the Jewish Theological Seminary in honor of the rabbi's birthday. She said:

"We of the Sisterhood have always had a feeling of friendship and admiration for our distinguished spiritual leader. In all the years of the institution's existence, we relied on the wise counsel and wholehearted cooperation of Rabbi Levinthal in all matters affecting the welfare of the Sisterhood.

"We are deeply grateful to him for the many years of service to the community and to the Center. The members of the Sisterhood are aware of the great interest Dr. Levinthal has always taken in promoting Jewish scholarship and have, therefore, awarded two scholarships at the Jewish Theological Seminary in honor of his sixtieth birthday. I am happy to present the certificate to you, Rabbi Levinthal, on behalf of the Sisterhood membership.

"May God bless you with many years of health and happiness together with your beloved wife, children and grandchildren."

Mr. David Gold extended the greetings of the Young Folks League, of which he is the President. He presented the rabbi with a certificate of trees planted by the Young Folks League to celebrate

the occasion, as well as a Jewish National Fund tree certificate on behalf of the Eastern Parkway Zionist District No. 14.

The addresses were concluded by brief remarks by our President, Judge Greenberg, who, on behalf of the Center, pre-

sented Dr. and Mrs. Levinthal with a check to enable them to visit Palestine in the near future.

Dr. Levinthal responded with thanks to the Committee and to the members of the Boards.

TRIBUTES TO DR. LEVINTHAL

Following are messages of congratulations received too late for publication last month.

RABBI Levinthal received several hundred messages of congratulations on his sixtieth birthday from rabbis and Jewish leaders in all parts of the country. We regret that lack of space prevents listing of all of them in the *Review*. We have, however, selected a few typical greetings:

RABBI SOLOMON GOLDMAN, Congregation Anshe Emet, Chicago

● Would I were in condition to pay the tribute Dr. Levinthal merits. Briefly, he belongs in the company of the truly great preachers of our day, comparable only to the giant *Darshanim* of Western Europe. His insight into the Biblical text and the acumen with which he selects his thematic verse, his mastery of *Midrash*, and skill with which he handles it, are hardly matched, certainly not excelled, in the pulpit. His published sermons are perfect models of the homiletical tradition, vivid historical *apercus*, penetrating studies of the contemporary world and brilliant essays to boot. But Dr. Levinthal is more than preacher. He is the consecrated Rabbi spurning the sensational and flippant, and zealous for the dignity and sanctity of his calling. He has guarded Judaism against reckless innovation and advocated and accepted changes that did not distort the essence. Even more praise-worthy is his modesty. Kindliness, geniality, a sweet, captivating smile reveal his whole being. To hear Dr. Levinthal preach is to admire him, to know him is to love him. May God grant him many healthy years. They are sure to be fruitful and creative.

THE PROTESTANT COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, BROOKLYN DIVISION—J. Henry Carpenter, Executive Secretary

● Since you have been in Brooklyn, you have made a very marked impression on the people of this community, the people within your group and all of our citizens. We are all very thankful in Brooklyn for having a leader with such deep spiritual insight and such great ability as you have.

May God give you additional strength and power as you go on in service to the people in your synagogue and for the many other interests of local and national concern with which you are connected.

EDWARD LAZANSKY

● I salute the distinguished and learned Rabbi, spiritual leader and forthright patriotic American citizen. May he be blest with many more years of good health and sound strength, to be a blessing to countless thousands by his benign influence. Here is a noble example of an unselfish life devoted to humankind.

MOSES GINSBERG

● *Shma Yisroel*, Hear, Oh Israel Levinthal, the praises and glowing tributes which are being paid to you by your friends from near and far, and take them into your heart. *Moshe Yedaber*, this is your life-long friend and admirer, Moses Ginsberg, expressing heartiest good wishes for your health and happiness on this sixtieth birthday. *Hineh lo yonum velo yisbon shomer Yisroel*. You, the watchman named Israel, did not slumber nor sleep these past thirty years, but awakened in the hearts of Brooklyn Jewry, the largest Jewish community in world history, the faith of Israel.

Following is the text of the address delivered by Judge Levinthal at the Center membership reception to Rabbi Levinthal on April 6.

MY BROTHER ISRAEL

By JUDGE LOUIS LEVINTHAL

I SPEAK for all the members of our family in tendering heart-felt thanks to you, the friends of my brother, for all the love you have shown him throughout the years of his ministry in your midst, and particularly for this beautiful tribute on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday. We Levinthals—all of us except the guest of honor himself—are mighty proud of our Israel. We are proud of the record he has achieved, a record not merely as a saintly rabbi, an eloquent preacher, a learned author, an inspiring communal leader, a devoted public servant, but, what is no less important, his record in the ordinary, day-by-day relationships of life—as a son, a brother, a husband, a father, a friend, a citizen, an American, a Jew, a human being.

I welcome the opportunity to pay homage this evening to the Brooklyn Jewish Center whose rabbi Israel has been since its inception. Anyone who is at all familiar with American Jewish life is aware of the fact that this institution is outstanding, indeed, in a class by itself. Individually and collectively, the members of this Center have demonstrated an unmatched loyalty to the Jewish people. They have consistently and increasingly distinguished themselves in the field of Jewish education, in ardent support of the Zionist movement, and in generous aid to all worthy American and Jewish and humanitarian causes.

This well-deserved praise of the Brooklyn Jewish Center, of course, redounds to the honor of its religious leader and spiritual mentor. As an author is judged by the books he writes and an artist by the picture he paints, so a rabbi is to be judged by the kind of men and women he produces. Israel is not a preacher who merely delivers interesting and instructive sermons. What he says from the pulpit is intended to achieve results in the hearts and souls of his listeners, to make them become different, to induce them to act differently. Harry Emerson Fosdick recently wrote that "a sermon should be a convincing appeal to a listening jury for decision." Every one of Israel's sermons throughout the years has been a

convincing appeal to a listening JEWRY for decision and for action. That is why the Brooklyn Jewish Center has a glory all its own.

Your Rabbi's influence, moreover, has not been confined to the membership of this Center, large and important as it is. Through his speaking tours in all sections of the country, and through his books of sermons, this great congregation has been multiplied many times. I believe I may say, without being uncharitable, that many orthodox, reform and conservative rabbis constantly resort to Israel's published writings for their sermons. His vogue may be illustrated by the remark a rabbinical friend once facetiously made to me: "Ask your brother Israel what he does on Saturdays without Levinthal's volumes to quote."

By applying the teachings of our ancient rabbis and sages to the vexing problems of modern life, Israel has the rare ability to get things done in the minds and in the lives of his listeners. As he put it in his Rosh Hashanah sermon in 1922: "We must stop drifting. We must begin to steer, to direct, to act prudently, wisely—but above all, to act—not to drift!" He has himself been ever "at the helm, like the captain on the ship, on the lookout as to how good may best be achieved." And he has succeeded in inspiring the rank and file of his Congregation to become captains of their own souls, masters of their destiny.

In this dreadful time through which our generation is passing, what we need above all else are the serenity, the courage and the wisdom of our ancestors—serenity to accept what cannot be changed, courage to change what can and ought to be changed, and wisdom to know the one from the other. Your Rabbi, steeped as he is in Jewish lore, may be relied upon to guide us through these perilous days, patiently, boldly, prudently, in the spirit of the Torah and in the light of our people's historic experiences.

As a fond brother, I naturally cannot speak of Israel with "the cold neutrality of an impartial judge." I venture, how-

ever, to believe that my judgment, though biased, is correct when I assert that Israel has been a mighty influence for good in this community not merely by his preaching, but even more, by his practice, by the example of his own life. A popular rhymster put in verse what most of us feel:

"I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;

I'd rather one should walk with me than merely show the way."

Israel has not only told us the way; he has walked the long, hard road, hand-in-hand with us, the gentle, ministering servant, the loving, friendly companion. He has been, in a literal sense, "a living sermon illustrating the truth he has taught." I wonder if we appreciate how very fortunate we are to have the blessed privilege of walking with him through life, basking in the warm glow of his inspired and inspiring personality.

Out of the depths of my heart I pray that Israel may continue for many, many years to come, in good health and in good spirits, with his beloved wife and children at his side, to lead us, to guide us, to ennoble and to enthuse us, to inspire faith in God, in ourselves, and in each other!

Committee in Charge of the Rabbi Levinthal Celebration

The following served on the Committee in charge of the sixtieth birthday celebration of Dr. Levinthal:

Dr. Moses Spatt, *Chairman*, Saul Abelov, Isidor Fine, Louis J. Gribetz, Max Herzfeld, Mrs. Isador Lowenfeld, Frank Schaeffer and Louis Simon.

Members of the Editorial Board of the REVIEW

LOUIS J. GRIBETZ, <i>Chairman</i>	M. H. LEWITTES
JOSEPH GOLDBERG	MANUEL SALTZMAN
JOSEPH KAYE	WILLIAM I. SIEGEL
I. H. LEVINTHAL	

This is the condensed text of the address delivered by Prof. Finkelstein, President of the Jewish Theological Seminary, at the reception to Dr. Levinthal on April 6.

AN INTERPRETER OF HIS GENERATION

By PROF. LOUIS FINKELSTEIN

DR. LEVINTHAL is the greatest master that I know of, of the ancient rabbinic *Midrash*. But he is not only a master of the words of our ancient rabbis, he has also followed their example. The remarkable thing about him is that he not only teaches by precept but by example. He is a descendant of Aaron, and he also fulfills the commandment of Hillel, that says: "It is not enough to be a descendant of Aaron, one must be *mitalmidar shel Aharon*—One must also be a disciple of Aaron." "*Ohev Sholom ve Rodef Sholom, Ohev es Habrius Um'korvon l'Torah.*"

As I was thinking of Dr. Levinthal's sixtieth birthday, I knew that I would be in this audience, which is an intimate one to me because it is here that I grew up. I remember these streets when they did not have any houses on them, and I can remember all of you when you were much younger. As I was thinking back over the years, it suddenly dawned upon me that Dr. Levinthal's role in this community was an especially profound one. Perhaps I would hesitate to say what I am going to say in any other place, but I feel that I can say it here, because I am sure that my experience must be the experience of many other people.

Many of you knew my father, *olov basbolom*, and knew what a fine scholar he was, and how genial a man he was. Well, he grew up in Slabodka and he was a *Talmid Chochom*. He knew many things that I did not know when I was young, and I still do not know. But when I went to high school, I found that I knew a great many things that my father did not know. My brothers and sisters spoke Yiddish to our parents, but among ourselves we spoke in English. And I always thought, in the back of my mind, that when I grew up my relationship to my children would be closer than my father's could possibly be to me. My father and I were good friends but I thought that my children would be closer to me because they would be going to the very schools to which I went, receive the very education that I have; and when they would have some difficulty

with their homework, I would be able to help them.

Well, I know my children would not mind my saying that it has not worked out that way. There is a chasm between us and our children much greater than existed between our fathers and us. My father and mother talked Yiddish and I talked English, but we never needed an interpreter when we talked to each other. We managed to understand our parents very well. But the world has moved so rapidly in these years that almost everyone of us needs an interpreter when we talk to our children. We talk their language, but they do not know what we are talking about, and I suspect that we do not know what they are talking about.

Well, among the people who are trying to interpret, and succeed in interpreting, what is going on in the minds of parents to children and what is going on in the minds of the youth to parents, Dr. Levinthal is preeminent.

I would call him the great bridge-builder—the man who builds the bridge between generations. As I look over this congregation and see people with grey hair like myself, and people with black hair—young people—I know, even more emphatically than I knew before I came here, what a remarkable bridge-builder he has been. He has made every inch of the Center an instrument of interpretation of one generation to another, in an age when we need it so much in our own homes.

I wonder how many of us realize how greatly indebted we and our children are to him for the peace of mind, for the happiness, for the geniality which fill our homes. That which came to our ancestors so naturally, must come to us through the great effort and the tireless effort of an interpreter, who stands here week after week, and tries to interpret you to your children and your children to you. There is no greater service that any man can render than to help his children understand him and to help the father understand the children. And

that service Dr. Levinthal has not only rendered here but to hundreds of communities. It is not only his books that are being studied and being quoted. He is being studied and he is being emulated. And would that it were possible for those who emulate him to reach his stature.

There is another job of interpretation that has to be done, and Dr. Levinthal is preeminent in that, too, the interpretation of each one of us to our neighbors. You know the Bible says: *Ve obavto Lereacho Komocho*. "Love thy neighbor as thyself." When I was young, I was very much impressed by what the Christian commentators say about that verse. They say that the Bible means that you should only love Jews, and they complained that Moses did not tell us to love people who were not our neighbors. For many years I was really impressed with that and I said to myself: "Why only your neighbors? Why not love a person who is not your neighbor, not your friend?" It was only when I grew older and watched people that I really got to understand what the Bible is talking about. I realized how easy it is to love a person whom one has never seen in one's life. It is so easy to love the Chinese. We cannot be envious of the Chinese; they do not take anything away from us; they are 12,000 miles away. Oh, it is easy to love the Chinese. But, how difficult it is to love one's next-door neighbor! How hard it is to love the person who is standing right next to us, and who, in crossing our path, sometimes does things that irk you; who insists upon opening the window when you want it closed, who insists upon standing up when you want him to sit down, who insists upon being a little more successful than you, whose children look a little better than yours. How hard it is to love one's next-door neighbor and how wise the Bible was when it said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." How

[Continued on page 27]

ON THE MEANING OF A BIRTHDAY

Dr. Israel H. Levinthal's Responses to the Celebration of His Sixtieth Birthday

The following is an extract from Dr. Levinthal's address at the dinner given him by the Board of Trustees and the Governing Board on April 6.

AS FAR as I know, there is no reference in our Rabbinic literature to a birthday celebration—except one, and strangely enough, that one is of a sixtieth birthday. The Talmud records that when Rav Joseph reached his sixtieth year he made that day a festive occasion for his fellow rabbis. "I have been saved," said he, "from being cut off prematurely." It seems that the prevalent idea then was that the years between 50 and 60 were the dangerous ones, and that anyone who died within these years suffered *Kores*, being cut off before his time—evidently because of some sin committed. But such an explanation really does not fully explain Rav Joseph's celebration, for if this were the common belief, then everyone who reached the age of 60 would have celebrated. Since this is the only celebration on record, it appears to me that there is deeper meaning in this little tale.

Rav Joseph, who lived in the fourth century, lived in a time of stress and misery for his people. His was a very difficult ministry. He had to build up the morale of his brethren and preserve their spiritual life. Often he felt he would be crushed under the weight of his burden. The Talmud, in that same passage I have discussed, tells us that another such leader, Rabbah, died at the age of forty. He could not stand up under the heavy strain. And thus when Rav Joseph did reach what was regarded as the ripe age of sixty he felt that a celebration was justified, particularly with his colleagues, who worked with him and could appreciate the difficulties he had encountered and overcome.

In a much more modest sense, mine, too, has been a difficult ministry. I often envied some of my colleagues who, upon graduation, went immediately to congregations of long standing, firmly established, with a well formulated tradition of service. Mine was a different

fate. I always came to synagogues that had to be built. The constant refrain that resounded in my ears was mortgages, debts, appeals for funds. And not only were the synagogues to be new buildings, but their organizations were new. Policies and philosophies had to be created and implemented. Many a time, I, too, felt crushed beneath the weight of the physical problems that beset us. Often I doubted if I could even carry on. Now that I have reached the ripe age of Rav Joseph, I too feel that I have a right to celebrate.

And it is especially fitting that I celebrate together with you, officers, trustees and governors of our institution. While you are not fellow-rabbis, you are *Chaverim*, comrades of mine in this holy work. You are the ones who were closest to me in our endeavors. You shared with me our difficulties. You appreciate the heavy obstacles that we faced and overcame. This is indeed the *Yoma Tova*, the festive celebration, of Rav Joseph and the *Rabbonon*.

I shall not be accused of conceit if I say that some of the success and credit that are mine have come to me because of this work. But I do want to emphasize that much of the success attributed to me has come because of you.

Our Center has attained lofty heights. And tonight I want to plead with you—continue to stand on those heights of aspiration, idealism and achievement. Do not permit yourselves nor our institution to descend from these heights. If you go down, I go down with you.

You recall the Bible tale of the Jews who made the golden calf. When God saw what happened he said to Moses, who was then on the mountain top, "Get thee down, for thy people have become corrupt." The Rabbis add to this picture: "Get thee down from thy greatness," said God to Moses. "This greatness with which I have endowed thee, is only because of Israel. Now that Israel has fallen, what art thou to me?" And the sages go on to tell us that just then—instantly—the strength of Moses vanished

and he lost his power to speak. *Atob V'bem B'yridab*, Thou and they fall together!

These words are my plea to you. I say again, remain in the heights of spiritual and cultural endeavors, that I too may glory in those heights. If you descend these *Ani V'atem B'yridab*, I too go down with you.

Let us together, standing on high, aspire to lift all the Jews of our community to those heights of Jewish living which will make all of us the blessed of God.

At the membership reception in the Synagogue, Rabbi Levinthal, after expressing his thanks to the guest speakers, the artists who sang, the Committee in charge, the officers, the editor of the CENTER REVIEW and his associates, and to all who had a share in this tribute, said, in part:

I DO not want to speak of myself nor of my work on this occasion. There comes to my mind a warning voiced in our Talmud. The book of Nehemiah is always referred to in the Talmud as part of the book of Ezra, as if the latter and not Nehemiah was the author. "Why is not this book called by his name?" ask the sages. And the answer is quite significant. "Because the author in that book takes too much credit for himself. He speaks too much about himself!"

Therefore he was punished by not having his name remembered. I surely do not want to suffer that fate, and therefore, I shall refrain from speaking about myself, especially since others, out of the goodness of their hearts, have said so much about me—much more than I truly deserve.

This, however, I may in all justice and in all humility say of myself. I believed, and I believe now in the Rabbinate. I loved the ministry. And this is one of the primary prerequisites for any success that may be achieved. The Rabbis in the Talmud tell us that "any priest who does not believe in his service, in the

[Continued on page 26]

BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER NEWS

Concluding Passover Services

SERVICES for the concluding days of the Passover holiday will be on Thursday evening, April 29th, at 8 o'clock, and on Friday evening, April 30th, at 6 o'clock; also on Friday and Saturday mornings, April 30th and May 1st, at 8:30 o'clock. Rabbi Saltzman will speak on Friday morning and Rabbi Levinthal will preach on the concluding day, Saturday morning.

Yizkor (memorial services for the dead) will be recited at the services on the last day of Passover, May 1st, at about 10:15 o'clock.

Hebrew School News

THE Hebrew School model Seder was held on Tuesday, April 20. The following led in the service: Larry Levy, Herbert Kasnetz, Charles Stromfeld, Frieda Cohen, Rena Rosenbaum, Helen Aronow, Ileana Altman, Ellen Machlin, Jules Hollander, Martin Arkowitz, Toby Brown, Carla Lefkowitz, Arlene Aaronson.

* * *

Impressive services were held by the Hebrew School on April 8, and by the Religious School on April 11, in connection with the Palestine Day of Prayer. The program for the service was: Star Spangled Banner; recitation of the poem, "Weep Not"; address, Rabbi Saltzman; Adon Olam; solo, "Song of Zion," Jane Amster; Y'rushalayim, Grade 3; Letter of Protest to President Truman, Ellen Machlin; "America, the Beautiful"; address, Rabbi Lewittes; Minute of Silence; Hatikvah.

A Post-Bar-Mitzvah Service was held on Friday, April 16, 1948. The program was as follows: Opening remarks by Rabbi Lewittes; Invocation, Lloyd Altman; Theme: "Education and Our Youth"; Introductory talk by Stanley Green, followed by these addresses: "Our Source of Inspiration," Alex Sterman; "The Danger of Tyranny," Leonard Beriman; "Our Dream of Zion," Daniel Klinghoffer; "Judaism and Democracy," Burton Garber; "World Peace," Lawrence Heimowitz; "The Significance of Our Past," Thomas Kraner; "Our Holy Tongue," Sandor Schaeffer; "The Need for Leaders," Robert Kritiz. The program

continued with: Charge to Graduates, Rabbi Saltzman; Conferring of Diploma, Dr. Levinthal; Acceptance, Abner Beder; Benediction, Dr. Levinthal; The Bar-Mitzvah Prayer, Morris Flamm; Conclusion of Service. Cantor Sauler during the service.

The Kushner Post-Bar-Mitzvah award for progress in Hebrew Studies was given to Abner Beder.

Center Academy News

THE annual Passover Seder of the Center Academy was held on Tuesday, April 20, 1948, in the dining room of the Brooklyn Jewish Center. The Day of Deliverance, as in the past, was a busy and exciting one for the boys and girls of the Academy. All the traditions of the holiday were faithfully observed, from the preparation of the Charoseth to the singing of the Chadgadya. The senior class was in complete charge of the festivities, with Arthur Greenberg serving as the Father and Barbara Zevon as the Mother. The services were opened with the traditional Beur Chamitz ceremony, at which Rabbi Levinthal officiated.

* * *

On Pan-American Day, April 14th, the 7th Grade children were hosts to a group of 30 visitors from the Chelsea Elementary School in lower Manhattan. The 7th Grade was returning the hospitality that had been extended to them by the Chelsea students in February. The visitors played basket ball and punchball with us, had lunch, were given an explanation of the significance of Passover and saw an original play presented by the boys and girls of the 7th Grade. At the end of the day, after we served ice cream and lolly-pops, our visitors bade us *au revoir*.

Junior Clubs Close Successful Season

ALL the Junior clubs had their closing session of the current year on Saturday evening, April 17th. This season has been a most successful one. The clubs had a very fine Jewish program of activities together with a very successful

athletic program. The last big event was our Purim festival which featured a talk on "The Significance of Purim for the Jewish Youth" given by Jimmy Lewisohn; piano selections by Morton and Clara Bromberg; clarinet selection by Conrad Lefkowitz. Mr. Julius Grossman, Musical Director of the Center, led the group in Purim songs.

The success of the club program was due to the very fine leadership of the groups and by the interest they stimulated amongst the membership. The members of the Junior clubs are eagerly looking forward to the re-opening of the club season next year.

Young Folks League

THE annual installation of officers and executive committee of the Young Folks League will be held on Tuesday evening, May 4th, at 8:30 o'clock. The rabbis and officers of the Center have been invited to attend. Members are urged not to miss this important event of the League.

Junior League News

THE Junior League of the Center is sponsoring an "Open Meeting" and "Social Get-Together" on Thursday evening, May 6th, at 8:30 o'clock. Members of the Junior League are cordially invited and are asked to bring their friends with them.

Daily Services

MORNING services at 8 a.m.
Mincha services at 7:30 p.m.

Junior Congregation Passover Festival Services

CONCLUDING Passover services will be held in the Junior Congregation on Friday and Saturday mornings, April 30th and May 1st, at 9:30 o'clock under the leadership of Rabbi Lewittes and Rabbi Saltzman. All children of the community are cordially invited to attend these very impressive services.

Lighting of Candles During Concluding Days of Passover

THE lighting of candles on Thursday and Friday evenings, April 29th and 30th, will be at 7:30 o'clock.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The following have applied for membership in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

BAKER, MISS MILDRED

Res. 2315 Avenue S
Proposed by Elaine Glover,
Dorothy Kaplan

BERNSTEIN, FREDERICK

Res. 430 Crown St.
Bus. Builder, 78-10 Parsons Blvd.
Single
Proposed by Samuel Bernstein

BRAAF, IRVING W.

Res. 307 Eastern Pkwy.
Bus. Catering, 836 Franklin Ave.
Married
Proposed by Ira T. Kraner,
Dr. I. H. Levinthal

COHEN, BENJAMIN

Res. 345 Montgomery St.
Bus. Furs, 214 W. 30th St.
Married
Proposed by Harry Mandler,
Albert Richman

EISENSTADT, RAYMOND

Res. 1050 Greene Ave.
Single
Proposed by Seymour Eisenstadt

FALK, IRVING

Res. 681 Lefferts Ave.
Bus. Textile, 105 W. 40th St.
Married
Proposed by Leo Kaufmann

FISGEL, MRS. RICKI

Res. 271 Parkside Ave.
Proposed by Mrs. Edward Schaeffer,
Dr. Jos. Leavitt

FRUCHT, WILLIAM

Res. 135 Ocean Ave.
Bus. Post Office, 1714 W. 6th St.
Married
Proposed by Samuel Robbins

GEICHMAN, MELVIN

Res. 116 E. 94th St.
Bus. Luggage, 507 W. Bway.
Single
Proposed by Isador Lowenfeld,
Seymour Feingold

GLASSBERG, MISS ESTHER R.

Res. 1651 Carroll St.
Proposed by Rose Snofsky,
Sylvia Nelson

GOLD, DAVID

Res. 1284 Dean St.
Bus. Export-Import, 50 Bway.
Married
Proposed by Mrs. I. Dolgin,
Bertram Hollander

GOLDMAN, MISS HELEN B.

Res. 1701 Avenue R
Bus. Dress Mfg., 1375 Bway.
Single
Proposed by Dorothy Kaplan,
Elaine Glover

GRINSPAN, MISS SHIRLEY

Res. 1216 St. Johns Pl.
Proposed by Selma Hollander,
Irma Baron

FIRESTONE, MISS DOROTHY

Res. 1052 E. 52nd St.
Proposed by Ruth Keltz,
Judith Sorscher

KAITZ, M. MARTIN

Res. 1393 Carroll St.
Bus. Dresses, 296 Kingston Ave.
Married
Proposed by Mrs. M. Klinghoffer,
Mrs. B. Friedman

KAYE, SAMUEL

Res. 9409 Avenue A
Bus. Exporters, 39 W. 37th St.
Single
Proposed by Sam Horowitz,
Lorraine Pomerantz

LIEBERMAN, MILTON J.

Res. 201 Crown St.
Bus. U.J.A., 165 W. 46th St.
Married

LIEBERMAN, SIDNEY

Res. 1364 Sterling Pl.
Bus. Provisions, 500 Bway.
Single

NORENSBERG, JACK

Res. 5223 Tilden Ave.
Bus. Fruit, 12 Brooklyn Terminal
Married
Proposed by Hyman Jasper,
Lewis Glozer

PERLIN, JACK

Res. 5614—15th Ave.
Bus. Millwork, 1160 Flushing Ave.
Married
Proposed by Irving Perlin,
Louis Brown

PERLMAN, PHILIP

Res. 925 Prospect Pl.
Bus. Ladies Handbags, 14 E. 32nd St.
Single
Proposed by Benj. Perlman,
Jos. Goldberg

SCHONBACH, JACOB

Res. 52 Balfour Pl.
Bus. Jobber, 1645 Bedford Ave.
Married
Proposed by M. Robert Epstein

SILVERMAN, MISS BEATRICE

Res. 1571 Carroll St.
Proposed by Benj. Grau,
Seymour Kornweiss

SIMCHOWITZ, HARRY

Res. 14 E. 58th St.
Bus. Furs, 330—7th Ave.
Married
Proposed by Julius Light,
Frank F. Rose

SKLARIN, MISS BABBIE

Res. 1833 E. 16th St.
Proposed by Bernard Meyerowitz,
Leo Chizner

SMITH, MISS GLORIA

Res. 1754 E. 24th St.
Proposed by Dorothy Kaplan,
Elaine Glover

STERN, LAWRENCE

Res. 639 Eastern Pkwy.
Bus. Shoes, 1580 Pitkin Ave.
Married

SUCHMAN, MAX

Res. 1522 Remsen Ave.
Bus. Furniture, 437—8th Ave.
Single
Proposed by John Dunaif,
Ben Goldberg

WALLACH, MISS ROSELYN

Res. 3086 W. 1st St.
Bus. Rent Control, 26 Court St.
Single
Proposed by Edward Schaeffer,
Dr. Jos. Leavitt

ZWERDLING, DR. PHILIP

Res. 297 New York Ave.
Bus. Physician
Married
Proposed by Tobias Zwerdling

LATE APPLICATIONS

POLLACK, MISS RUTH

Res. 333 Neptune Ave.
Proposed by Thelma Spruck,
Sylvia Lichtman

WACHTEL, LEO

Res. 961 Eastern Pkwy.
Bus. Clothing, 140—5th Ave.
Single
Proposed by John Dunaif,
Ben Goldberg

The following has applied for reinstatement:

MARCUS, ZACHARIAH

Res. 961 Lincoln Pl.
Married
Proposed by Herbert Turner,
Leo Kaufmann

SAMUEL H. GOLDBERG,
Chairman, Membership Committee.

Congratulations

HEARTIEST congratulations and best wishes are extended to:

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Weinstock of 135 Eastern Parkway on the birth of a son, Douglas, to their children, Mr. and Mrs. Gerard Weinstock, on April 19th.

Jewish National Fund Assembly

A JEWISH National Fund Assembly was held by the Hebrew School on Sunday, April 18th. A scroll, commemorating the planting of a garden in Palestine in recognition of the large sum of money contributed by our students, was presented by the J.N.F. Mr. Mordecai Rudensky made the presentation on behalf of the J.N.F. The citation on the scroll read as follows: "A garden has been planted in Palestine in honor of the students of the Brooklyn Jewish Center Hebrew School in recognition of their efforts on behalf of the Jewish National Fund. November 1947."

The presentation of the scroll was followed by Palestinian movies taken by Mr. Samuel Edelheit when he visited Eretz Israel.

In Memoriam

WE announce with deep regret the passing of our member

Mrs. Hannah Zirinsky

of 361 New York Avenue on April 21, 1948.

The Brooklyn Jewish Center extends its most heartfelt sympathy and condolence to the family and relatives in their bereavement.

Additions to the Library

THE following books have been added to our library and are ready for circulation:

"The Moonstone"—Wilkie Collins
"Great Expectations"—Charles Dickens
"Les Miserables"—Victor Hugo
"The Stoic"—Theodore Dreiser
"Years of the Pilgrimage"—K. S. Davis
"Masterworks of Philosophy"—Edited by S. D. Frost, Jr.
"Van Hassel Diaries"
"An Explorer Comes Home"—Roy C. Andrews

"Story of Mankind"—Hendrik Van Loon

"Roget's Thesaurus"—C. O. S. Mawson
"Milton Cross's Great Operas"

"Favorite Poems"—Henry W. Longfellow

"Unconquered"—Neal H. Swanson

"The Bishop's Mantle"—Agnes S. Turnbull

"Prince of Foxes"—Samuel Shellabarger

"The Enduring Federalist"—Chas. A. Beard

"Selected Writings of Solomon Schechter"—N. Bentwich

"Essays of Jewish Biography"—Alexander Marx

"Selected Essay of Ahad Ha'am"—Leon Simon

"Modern Nationalism and Religion"—Salo W. Baron

"American Overture"—A. V. Goodman

"Eagle in the Sky"—Van Wyck Mason

"The Jew in American Sport"—Herbert N. Ribalow

"Inside Karilevke"—Shalom Aleichem

"Abraham of Terah"—Florence Marvyn Bauer

"Anti-Semitism in America, a Mark for Privilege"—Carey McWilliams

Hebrew Books

"Aruch Ha-shalem"—Alexander Kohut (2 vols.)

"Dibre Yeme Am Olam"—Simon Dubnow (11 vols.)

"Abodath Israel" (Siddur)—Isaac Baer (original 1868 edition)

"Toledoth Haposkim"—Haim Tschernowitz (3 vols.)

"Sifre edition"—Meyer Friedman

"Sifra edition"—I. H. Weiss

"Pirke d'Rabbi Eliezer with Commentary of D. Luria"

"Milon Ivri" (Dictionary)—Jehudah Grazovski

"Hechal Ledibre Ha'zal Upithgemehem"—Haim Bloch

"Sefer Ha-Chasidut"—Isaac Werfel

"Ha Yehudim Ve Ha Yeranin"

"Betkufat Ha 'Halenists"

"Abigor Tscherikover"

Bar Mitzvah

A HEARTY Mazel Tov is extended to Mr. and Mrs. Morris D. Berger of 546 Montgomery Street on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, J. Lawrence, which will be celebrated at the Center on Saturday morning, May 8th.

Acknowledgment of Gifts

WE acknowledge with thanks receipt of donations for the purchase of Prayer Books, Taleisim and books in our library from the following:

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Aminoff in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Melvin.

Miss Rhoda Bernstein.

Mr. Elias Burros in memory of his wife, Esther.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Daum in honor of the marriage of their daughter, Rita.

Messrs. Meyer and Philip Feldman in memory of parents.

Mr. and Mrs. William Garfinkle in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son, George Lawrence.

Miss Helene Wolfe.

Mr. Jacob Harmatz in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of his grandson, Kenneth Spatz.

Mr. and Mrs. Saul Kabram in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Leonard.

THE
Brooklyn Jewish Center
has acquired
CEMETERY GROUNDS
in the
NEW
Montefiore Cemetery
at
PINELAWN, LONG ISLAND

Prices of Plots

4 Grave Plots	\$250.00
6 Grave Plots	\$350.00
15 Grave Plots	
(facing main road)	\$1,000.00

YAHREZEITS—MAY, 1948

Kalman I. Ostrow	Mother	May 1	22 Nisan
Max Rudy	Father	May 1	22 Nisan
Mrs. L. W. Bernard	Husband	May 2	23 Nisan
Louis Rosenblatt	Mother	May 2	23 Nisan
Charles Fine	Brother	May 3	24 Nisan
Meyer Kenin	Father	May 3	24 Nisan
Joseph Richman	Father	May 3	24 Nisan
Mrs. Rubin Tucker	Mother	May 3	24 Nisan
Mrs. Louis J. Palatnick	Father	May 4	25 Nisan
Benjamin Dubrow	Father	May 5	26 Nisan
Dr. Reuben Finkelstein	Father	May 5	26 Nisan
Louis Hoffman	Mother	May 5	26 Nisan
Benjamin Levitt	Father	May 5	26 Nisan
Abraham Mann	Father	May 5	26 Nisan
A. Silverman	Mother	May 5	26 Nisan
Jacob A. Fortunoff	Mother	May 6	27 Nisan
Hon. Emanuel Greenberg	Father	May 6	27 Nisan
Philip Levine	Father	May 6	27 Nisan
Mrs. Sol Sussman	Father	May 8	29 Nisan
Charles Wunderlich	Mother	May 8	29 Nisan
Mrs. Abraham Cohen	Mother	May 10	1 Iyar
Philip Palevsky	Mother	May 10	1 Iyar
Emanuel Goldsmith	Mother	May 11	2 Iyar
Joseph Horowitz	Father	May 12	3 Iyar
I. Silberberg	Father	May 12	3 Iyar
Mrs. Frank Brodie	Mother	May 13	4 Iyar
Jerome H. Cole			
Mrs. Edward Manes			
Mrs. Samuel Nicoll	Wife	May 14	5 Iyar
David Phillips			
Morris Traub			
Al Witty	Father	May 14	5 Iyar
Mrs. H. Lieb	Mother	May 16	7 Iyar
Mrs. I. Ginsberg	Daughter	May 17	8 Iyar
Abraham Ginsburg	Father	May 17	8 Iyar
Isidor Gray	Mother	May 17	8 Iyar
Frank Levey	Father	May 17	8 Iyar
I. Jerome Riker	Mother	May 17	8 Iyar
Mrs. I. Lazarowitz	Husband	May 19	10 Iyar
Mrs. S. A. Schneider	Mother	May 20	11 Iyar
Louis Weinstock	Father	May 20	11 Iyar
Mrs. H. Greenblatt	Husband	May 22	13 Iyar
Alfred Greenblatt			
Samuel Greenblatt			
Irving Steinberg	Mother	May 22	13 Iyar
Harold Cantor	Mother	May 23	14 Iyar
Max Herzfeld	Mother	May 23	14 Iyar
Abe Mann	Mother	May 23	14 Iyar
Samuel Rottenberg	Father	May 23	14 Iyar
Harry Glaubman	Mother	May 24	15 Iyar
Joseph Glaubman			
Louis Glaubman			
Dr. Max Goldstein	Father	May 24	15 Iyar
Morris M. Lubell	Mother	May 24	15 Iyar
Philip Rosenbloom	Father	May 24	15 Iyar
Morris D. Berger	Father	May 25	16 Iyar

To Members Planning Bar Mitzvahs at the Center

MEMBERS who are planning Bar Mitzvahs in the near future are requested to please reserve the date far in advance.

According to the rules of the Center, the boy whose Bar Mitzvah is booked first receives the privilege of getting the maftir. In the event that more than one Bar Mitzvah is scheduled for the same day, the other boys receive one of the other aliyahs and can read a passage from the Torah.

Prior Registration in Center Academy for Center Membership

The Center Academy of the Brooklyn Jewish Center is now open for prior registration in the lower school for children of Center members. Vacancies are limited, so please apply early.

CENTER LIBRARY

Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3 to 9 p.m.

The Library, located on the third floor of our building, has a fine collection of books in Hebrew, English and Yiddish.

Open to Center Members and the Community.

Young Folk's League United Jewish Appeal COCKTAIL-DANCE

Sunday Evening, May 16th
8:30 o'clock

\$2.00 Donation

Limited to Members only upon presentation of 1948 card.

PIONEER OF MODERN HEBREW

[Continued from page 13]

the idea that Hebrew might become the daily vernacular occupied his mind. He learned that Hebrew was spoken by Jews of the East, and he likewise began to speak it. Soon he realized that Hebrew lacked the necessary everyday words and this prompted him to embark upon his life work—the Hebrew dictionary.

In 1882, Ben Yehudah settled in Palestine, and there he became a sturdy and independent fighter for the revival of spoken Hebrew. He founded the Hebrew weekly newspaper *Hazeri*, which he edited for several years, assisted by his wife and his son. They formed the first Hebrew-speaking family in the country.

The forty-odd years of his residence in Eretz Israel were years of continuous activity. He edited and published several Hebrew weeklies, wrote a number of text-books, and, above all, fought for the spread of Hebrew speech. His zeal was inexhaustible and his opinions unshakable. He was opposed to the old ways of thought and actions, and fanatically upheld his ideal—to make Hebrew a living medium of communication.

Single-handed, he set out upon his gigantic undertaking of the dictionary. He worked in the leading libraries of the world, searching for new words, suitable expressions and idioms. When he found no suitable terms in ancient literature, he invented new ones to fill the gap until

words would spring up from life itself. In 1903 Eliezer Ben Yehudah established the *Va'ad ha-Lashon*, a Language Board, which was to watch over the development of the living Hebrew language and its applications to the requirements of the present.

Ben Yehudah succeeded in overcoming all obstacles to his work.

The establishment of the new Yishuv brought new life into Palestine. The Halutzim endured their hardships and labored to achieve success. They spoke, sang and read only Hebrew. With relentless fanaticism, they demanded Hebrew of the Jews of Palestine. And they had their way. The new Yishuv was completely Hebraized, and in this movement the youth of all the settlements joined hands. Eliezer Ben Yehudah thus spent the last years of his life witnessing the approaching fulfillment of the dream of his youth.

Ben Yehudah stands out as the pioneer of the Jewish Renaissance, a man who made himself one with a Jewish homeland. His life belongs fittingly to the realm of story and fable. He has become more a myth than a man. He was and is a symbol of our national work and of the cultural ideals of Free Palestine. Ben Yehudah died beloved by all classes of Jewish people in Eretz Israel.

YAHREZEITS

Hyman Bloomgarden	Father	May 25	16 Iyar
Nathaniel H. Jackson	Mother	May 25	16 Iyar
Miss Dora Leaks	Mother	May 26	17 Iyar
Mrs. Sadie Zankel	Husband	May 26	17 Iyar
Charles Zankel	Father		
Max Zankel			
Harry Zankel			
Mrs. David Feinberg	Husband	May 27	18 Iyar
Seymour Koff	Father	May 27	18 Iyar
Oscar Kurshan	Father	May 27	18 Iyar
Samuel Kurshan			
Dr. Maurice Schnall	Father	May 27	18 Iyar
Judah Trotzky	Mother	May 28	19 Iyar
Mrs. Charles Fine	Father	May 29	20 Iyar
Morris Miller	Father	May 29	20 Iyar
Samuel Robbins	Father	May 29	20 Iyar
Mrs. Abraham Ginsburg	Father	May 30	21 Iyar
Mrs. Louis Albert	Father	May 31	21 Iyar
Isidor Gray	Father	May 31	21 Iyar

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ON THE MEANING OF A BIRTHDAY

[Continued from page 20]

work that he has to perform, can claim no share in the priesthood; only the priest who believes in his service can claim the rewards that the priesthood offers." I can, in all modesty, say that I believed in this work, that I loved it and was ever thankful for it. And I am particularly thankful that it was my privilege to serve in your midst, a congregation of high ideals, who have ever cooperated with me, who encouraged and inspired me in all that I aspire to achieve.

And this, too, I want and feel I may say. There are three books in our Bible which Jewish tradition attributes to the authorship of King Solomon: *Shir Ha-shirim*, the Song of Songs, that beautiful ode to love, perhaps the greatest love poem in all literature; *Misble*, the book of Proverbs, in which are gathered choice words of wisdom; and *Kobelet*, Ecclesiastes, the philosophy of pessimism, which rings with the refrain "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Now the Rabbis tell us when Solomon wrote the Song of Songs he wrote in his youth; Proverbs he composed in middle age, out of the ripeness of his experience, and Ecclesiastes he set forth in his old age.

Like King Solomon, I, too, was privileged to have sung a *Shir Ha-shirim* in my youth. And I am grateful to God that I can still sing the Song of Love. Evidently, I am still young. I pray that I and my beloved wife may continue to sing that *Shir Ha-shirim* for many years to come.

After my graduation, when I began to serve as Rabbi, I, too, like Solomon of old, began to teach and preach the *Misble* of Israel—those wise teachings and sayings of our ancient masters. I saw in that rich Midrashic literature wisdom spoken not for the ancient days alone, but for all time.

But unlike Solomon—now that I have reached sixty, which, according to the sages, typifies *Ziknob*, old age—I am not ready to say "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." I still refuse to become the pessimist. And if that is the sign of old age, then I protest that I am still young. For I am an inveterate optimist.

Birthdays are nice, and it is pleasant to celebrate them. I am reminded, however, that the great Alexandrian Jewish

philosopher, Philo, in one of his books, warns us that the celebration of birthdays is a form of idolatry. If a birthday means nothing more than a joyous celebration, then it is in truth a form of idolatry—an empty, meaningless observance. The Jew is taught to count days so as to acquire a heart of wisdom. He looks to the passing of years as a challenge. That is the spirit in which I—and I hope you too—regard this day. It is a warning that the day is short—yea,

the day is getting shorter. And the work is great—yea, so much is yet to be done. Let it not be said of you nor of me that "the workmen are sluggish." For "the Master is urgent." Destiny summons us. Time is of the essence. Let us on this day rededicate ourselves to work, through our beloved Jewish Center, to bring closer the sunlight of peace and happiness in the life of our people and our people's land and in the lives of all the peoples on earth.

JEWISH DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Resolution unanimously adopted by the General Council of the World Zionist Organization on April 12, 1948, at Tel Aviv:

WHEREAS, after twenty-seven years of an oppressive foreign regime that had received Palestine as a trust on behalf of the world to establish a national homeland for the Jews, that trust was not fulfilled:

Now, therefore, the Jewish nation will establish its own state and independence in its homeland.

The Jewish state to be established will be ruled by justice, freedom and equality for all inhabitants, regardless of race or creed.

We call upon the Arabs of Palestine and the neighboring states for an alliance of peace and cooperation. Together we shall build a state as citizens with equal rights and in mutual respect, for our freedom is your freedom.

Our lives are dedicated to defense, and the Lord of Israel will be our mainstay.

On this, the third day of Nissam, the General Council of the World Zionist Organization, its highest unit, announces to the civilized peoples of the world, to the representatives of the United Nations and to the Jews scattered throughout the world that it has been decided to set up an organ of supreme authority of our national independence in Palestine.

In pursuance of this purpose, we declare that we refuse to remain a minority dependent on the sufferance of others. The mandate is about to end. On May 15 His Majesty's Government will surrender to the United Nations the trust it received from the League of Nations twenty-seven years ago and which it has

failed to fulfill. It departed from the spirit of the mandate and replaced it with the selfish purpose of furthering its Middle East interests.

As a result of this policy, our refugees were refused entry in the hour of their direst need. They were interned instead and condemned to lead a life of danger, humiliation and helplessness while the mandatory treated with our sworn enemies, the friends and allies of the Nazis. And while refusing entry to Jews striving desperately after a last refuge they opened our frontiers to hordes of invaders come to make a mockery of the decision of the United Nations. And now the mandatory is proposing to destroy the very foundation of our existence and leave the country in utter chaos.

To prevent this we have resolved this day that the termination of the mandatory government of Palestine shall in fact mark the end of all foreign domination in this country. With the termination of this mandatory rule, a government of the Jewish state shall come into being.

In this hour we turn to the Arab citizens of the Jewish state and our Arab neighbors. We desire to build our state in common with the Arabs as equal citizens. Their future and ours rest on common endeavor.

Sure in the justice of our cause, we are ready to give our all to its achievement and we call on the Jews of all lands, and especially in Palestine, to close their ranks for the carrying out of this, our sublime task. Assured in our faith, we appeal to all nations to grant us the right to our own salvation, and rest our trust in God, the Lord of Israel.

AN INTERPRETER OF HIS GENERATION

[Continued from page 19]

wise Moses was—how he knew what he was talking about when he said: Never mind the fellows whom you never see—try to love the fellow who is standing right next to you. The other fellows will take care of themselves.

Well, Dr. Levinthal is a man who helps us love and understand our next-door neighbors. In our Rabbinic Assembly, which consists of all the graduates of the Seminary and a number of other rabbis, and of whom I think I can say, without undue pride, that it is probably the most distinguished group of ministers in this country, Dr. Levinthal is the great interpreter of man to man. When feelings become tense, it is a remarkable thing to have Dr. Levinthal there. He peers through the maze of arguments to the issue and shows how people who think they are disagreeing are not disagreeing at all, but only think they are disagreeing; they are rationalizing into disagreement the things which, when they see them, they are ashamed of. And so he does the job that Aaron did—he meets people and brings them together and does that great miracle of transforming people, who might very well become enemies, into friends. We, of the Seminary, the rabbis of America, like you, are indebted to him for his great leadership. We look across the years, and remember so many instances when the air was tense with difficulty, and when the calm words, the benign smile, the loving glance of Dr. Levinthal, and his great wisdom brought peace where there might have been struggle and difference.

And then, of course, there is another great job of interpretation that must be done, one so vital today—the job of getting the world to understand what we Jews are talking about—why we are Jews. What great catastrophes have come upon the world as well as upon us because the peoples of the world do not understand this small Jewish people. What a different world it would be in 1948 if the world in 1933 would have known the heartache of the Jewish people and what we meant when we said that the attack on the Jews was not an attack on the Jews but an attack on civilization. How many who are now dead would still be living, how many who

are now wounded would not be wounded at all, and the great dangers facing us today would not even be a distant nightmare, if only in 1933 we could have gotten the ear of the world when we said, "We are not a people that is trying to live to be a people. We are trying to render a service to mankind. We are trying to maintain a tradition—a prophecy—and, when we are disliked and persecuted—it is not we who are being disliked and persecuted, it is the Prophets who are being disliked and persecuted; and they are not our prophets, they are the world's prophets."

All this the world did not know and, alas, we did not have enough Dr. Levinthals to make what we said clear to the world of 1933. A frightful price has been paid and God knows when the end is going to be.

Dr. Levinthal is doing as much as one man can possibly do to give dignity to the Jewish name. He is beloved by all of us; but he is beloved way beyond the boundaries of the Jewish people.

The real work of interpreting Judaism to the world is being done here, in the Center, and by our great rabbi and his disciples and the disciples of this Center in other places. So, I bring to Dr. Levinthal tonight the tribute of his Alma Mater, the tribute of my colleagues on the faculty of the Seminary, and the tribute of the rabbis of the country. He has rendered us a service of which not everyone is yet aware. It is a service of the spirit, and it is characteristic of the service of the spirit that you do not know when you have been affected by a great man. He has put to his debt not only us of this generation, but the children and grandchildren who are coming after us because, if the Talmud were not to be handed down from one generation to another, where would our grandchildren get it from?

I know that you will realize that I am not speaking out of blasphemy, but out of the depth of my heart, when I say that it is possible for a man to put God in his debt. There is nothing that God wants more than good men, I am sure, and when one of his children devotes himself to making human beings better

human beings, that person has put God in his debt.

I pray that God may repay that debt with great blessings for Dr. and Mrs. Levinthal and their children, and Dr. Levinthal's father and his brothers, and all of you who are so dear to him, so that he may have many years of happiness, and that, in your day and in his, there may come peace to the world and to our people some solace and comfort after so many years of hardship and trial.

LAND FOR DEFENSE

[Continued from page 7]

the interval, more land had been acquired in southern Beisan and three new settlements established. Today its flank and rear are covered; if it is hard pressed, there is help near at hand. If still more land were bought and two new settlements built, a closely-linked chain of Jewish defenses would exist along the Jordan, strengthening each other and forming a barrier to the west.

A similar pattern was started on the Syrian frontier in the Upper Huleh region. Dan and Dafne, with only about a mile between them, buttress each other. Between Dafne and Maayan Baruch, however, there is a space of about three miles. Another settlement link would have strengthened the chain.

In the Negev, twenty-three outposts scattered over a vast expanse including southernmost Judea serve a double purpose. Isolated and vulnerable though most of them are, they serve not only as footholds for our further forward progress and oblige the enemy to scatter his own resources, but they also prevent, in a measure, the concentration of enemy forces in this great empty region.

Less than 7% of Land Jewish-Owned

The master-plans of land purchased by the Jewish National Fund—especially since 1936—have given high priority to considerations of defensive strategy. But with less than seven percent of Palestine land in Jewish ownership, these plans are necessarily only in the early stages of realization.

—From "Haganah Speaks."

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